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THE GLAD RETURN.

BY HARVEY HOWARD.

Jack Frost has departed at last,
His white whiskers have whisked out of sight,
And spring has sprung out of the vernal vales
As the morning follows the night.

The buds are beginning to sprout,
And the grass is beginning to grow;
A few little linnets are hopping about;
And I hear the caw of a crow.

The breeze so sweet that caressed me
Have stolen their fill of perfume
From buds that are narrowly opened,
As though they were learning to bloom.

The brooklet flows free through the meadow;
The rippling lake laughs in its glee;
And the languid breeze chants a low anthem,
Whose song is meant only for me.

The canoe that rocks idly beneath me
Rocks idly again 'neath the wave;
By the side of the boat looking upward
A face that is youthful and grave.

Yes, grave, yet not solemn with sorrow,
But calm with unspeakable bliss,
The bliss of the coming of springtime,
The return of the life that we miss.

RED ROB.

The Boy Road-Agent.

BY OLL COOMES.

AUTHOR OF "DAKOTA DAN," "BOWIE-KNIFE
BEN," "OLD HURRICANE," "HAWKEYE
HARRY," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NEW MASTER OF THE CAMP.

THE ranger's words were all lost to the ears of those they were intended for, but to Octavia's ears they were as tidings of joy supreme. "Dakota Dan," she repeated, as though she might be mistaken in the words; "is it possible that I heard aright?"

"Yes, mum, I'm Dakota Dan, just down, fresh as a new-plucked flower, from the Key-Paha; and proud I be of the name and the man, too, Miss. Come, Patience, ole mare, sail into it—show the gal yer bottom! Smoke of Jerusalem! didn't I play it skintintially to 'em smoky varlets? I war hid in that grove behind 'em, and when I sees what war up, I says: 'Dakota Dan, now, ole Triangular, primp yer-self and try yer nerve. Bet they'll be more keeful next time. Whar d'ye live, gal? up to Conejos!'"

"I belong to an emigrant-train," replied Octavia.

"Say ye do! how's it yer down yer?"

Briefly as possible, the maiden narrated her adventure from the time of leaving the trail till her capture by the two chiefs.

"Judea!" exclaimed the old ranger, "then that's what made that thunderin' racket up that way. Thought it war a hurricane or a volcano—got a cannon, hain't ye? Licked the red-skins, didn't ye?"

Octavia scarcely knew which question to answer first, she was so delighted over her miraculous escape. However, she answered her interlocutor's queries as far as her own knowledge extended.

"Well," replied the reckless old ranger, "times are a leetle frisky down this a-way now; and one's got to keep a-bobbin' to dodge all the dangers."

By this time the old borderman had placed nearly half a mile between him and the pursuing red-skins, who were now directly behind him, coming on a straight line. It was the desire of the ranger to get back to the grove from which he had burst so suddenly upon his foe; and, in order to accomplish this, he began bearing gradually toward the left. In a few minutes he was going directly north.

The enemy could have taken the "near cut" across, and gained considerably on him, but, believing he was endeavoring to draw them into an ambush, relinquished the chase altogether. This was contrary to anything the ranger had anticipated, as well as to the usual dogged patience and perseverance of savage vengeance.

This turn of affairs enabled the ranger to slacken the speed of his animal, when he dismounted, and gave the mare up entirely to Octavia, he walking at her side with all the elastic spring and sprightliness of youth.

The maiden protested against this self-sacrifice in her behalf. It seemed to her that she was as well able to walk as the old man.

"Bless you, little 'un," the ranger responded, "you needn't worry one bit 'bout me. I'm growin' younger in spirit every day. My hair will git white though, and ole Time will wear furrows into my face; but I reckon that's all owing to the climate one's in, and the condition of his blood. Way up in the cool regions of Montana, one's vital fluid gits purty cloggy-like-thick, ye know? But come down this way into Dakota and Nu-braska, and it begins to thin up a leetle, and one stops friskier; but, come on down here into Nu Mexeko, and one's blood gits so thin that it runs right out at the pores of the skin. Nothin' but a good coat of dirt will keep a northern man's blood in him down here; then the sun bakes that on him, and he looks fur all the world like a Mexican. That's what's ailin' me, miss, but I hope you'll excuse my looks. But, here we are, little 'un—back to the very grove that I went bulgin' out of when the race commenced. Lor', but it does me a mortal sight of good to think how I waxed it to 'em smoky-skinned centipedes. But then, I've fooled red-skins a million times in my life—it's my forte, I swear it is, to foolish red-skins. Foolishness of one sort or another allers did run natural-like in the Rack-back family, and if one wasn't a fool, he had the knack of playin' it to a demonstration, and then—"



A huge gray panther, already goaded to frenzy, sprung into the inclosure with Basil Walrayment.

other allers did run natural-like in the Rack-back family, and if one wasn't a fool, he had the knack of playin' it to a demonstration, and then—"

"Bow-wow!"

It was the sudden and deep bay of a dog, coming from the depths of the grove before them, that cut short the ranger's speech and forced a cry of surprise from Octavia's lips.

"Scorpions!" exclaimed the ranger, stopping short.

The next moment a dog came bounding through the shrubbery, and leaped upon the ranger, and frisked and capered around the horse in an excess of joy.

"There, now, gal," said Dakota Dan, with an air of whimsical satisfaction, "there, you behold Dakota Dan, the great triangler, red-skin exterminator. That"—thrusting out his finger at the dog with manifest delight—"that is Humility, my dorg. I left him here to watch my gun and accoutrements while I sailed out and raked the ante at the hoss-race," and the old man went off into a fit of hearty laughter at the thoughts of his own conceit.

"You see, Miss," he continued, "I'm simply ole Dan Rackbackalone, but hitch in Patience, my mare here, and Humility, my dorg, thar, and you have the 'triangle,' Dakota Dan. We're a kind of a livin' clock-work—one part can't operate well without 'others; and when we git set a-go'in'—buckle right down to the work, Lor'! then bounce, red-skins away, buffaloes howl, varmints, and you, ye porcores, dust! You see, Miss, that dorg has a mortal sight of man gumphish. That bow-wow was a challenge, which, translated to English, means, 'Who comes thar?' 'Scorpions,' war the counter-sign, or whatever ye call it, and then all war distinctly distinct. Yes, a noble pup, are Humility, my dorg, thar. He's a wonderful tooth for red-skins, and can follow the trail of a bird through the air. He's jest as good as ever scratched gravel from an Alpine peak, or dug snow for a Saint Bernard monk. And so's Patience, my mare, here. She's a leetle thin jist at present, but can play tricks jist as good as any critter that ever tickled a audience—good blood in here—jist as good as ever boxed Arabian soil or kicked the day-lights outen an Arab. Yes, noble critters are Patience, my mare here, and Humility, my dorg, thar. I could trace their pedigree clear back to Noah and the Ark."

"I know from experience," said Octavia, desirous of encouraging him in his love for his dumb companions, "that Patience is fast."

"Fast!" exclaimed the ranger, in apparent astonishment; "why, bless yer little soul, gal, ye don't know what fast is. You'd ort to see her do her best. As an illustrashin, I'll tell ye, while we rest, what we done onct. Patience, she played blind, lame and halt, and I played crazy. In this condition we sailed into a crowd of Ingins to see what war goin' on; for we war rangern for the Government then, and war actin' spy. Wal, we got in all right, but we looked so 'tarnal tough and discom-

ported, that the red-skins concluded to have some fun and make us run the gantlet. So 'bout a million of them, more or less, formed in two lines facin', and started us down atwixt 'em, every sinner intending to whack us as we labored by. But Judea! I spoke to Patience and that's the last them red-skins seed of her. A way she flew down that gantlet so swift that a crack, big as a tunnel, was actly split into the air, and then as the gap filled up again—rushed in from both sides, them red-skins war slapt together—that is the two lines—war jist suked right in together so awfully that every red-skin war busted. It's a fact; but now, Miss, we'll go."

The old borderman led the way from the grove and across the plain toward the north.

He moved briskly, and just as the last beams of light faded from the distant mountain heights they reached the train, which had gone into camp on the scene of the late conflict.

Amid the wildest excitement and shouts of joy, Octavia rode into camp.

"Bress de Lor' ob heaben!" shouted old Aunt Shady, clapping her fat hands with joy, and alternating between fits of laughter and outbursts of tears.

Octavia introduced her rescuer to the party. The name and deeds of Dakota Dan were well known to all, but it was the first occasion upon which any of them had ever met the distinguished scout and ranger.

Dan was for soon taking his departure, but on the earnest and urgent solicitation of the men and Octavia, he finally concluded to remain until morning. The emigrants also prevailed upon him, as a matter of honor as well as necessity, to take charge of the encampment, which he did with some reluctance, for he saw there was a great deal at stake. With his characteristic open-heartedness and familiar ways, the ranger set about his work of arranging the camp and horses in the safest condition possible under existing circumstances.

After all had been secured, and two guards for the first watch had been posted, the little band gathered in a group near the center of the camp, and entered into conversation.

Lanterns hung from the side of the wagons, lit up the scene. The late conflict was the principal topic discussed and commented upon.

"This 'ere is a most all-fired, ticklish kentry, friends," said Dan, philosophically. "If ye set down on the perarco, ten to one you'll git rite up and look daggers at the cactus you sot on; and if ye lay down to rest, ten to one the lance of a red-skin'll be jabbed into ye. If it arn't Ingins, why it's 'greasers,' and if it arn't greasers, it's outlaws, and if it arn't outlaws, it's the devil himself. It's mighty risky, I tell ye, in you folks trampoonin' this 'ere kentry with feminine women, and afore ye git clean through to San Juan valley, I'm afraid you'll have skids of trouble. You see the great Tri-angle's been gallivantin' all over Nu Mexeko for six months, and have got the lay of the land furty prim. And we've had some fights too, that took every nerve of man, hoof and

howler to fetch victory or death. Lor'! we've shed gallons and gallons of the best of blood since we've been down here."

"Bress my soul!" exclaimed old Aunt Shady at this juncture, innocent of any offense; "guess you won't shed much more—awful lean ole sinner."

"Always was, Aunt Shadder," replied Dan, good-naturedly; "it runs in the Rackback family. Thar war ten boys of us, and ole Mrs. Rackback used to stand us a whole summer in the garden fer bean-poles, to keep us outen mischief; but I growed faster'n the beans and pulled 'em all out by the roots, and so I war took out of the garden and sent West to 'pre-empt.' But I'd rather be lean than plump and fat like you, Aunt Shadder. And I'll tell ye why. Buffaloes are so lean down here that the Ingins kill all the fat folks to fry their meat with."

Aunt Shady groaned with horror, but her emotions finally ended in a fit of laughter.

"Then you have no idea, Dan, who those rangern were? nor where they belong?" Major St. Kenelm asked.

"No more'n the man in the moon," responded the ranger. "They may b'long to some of the many military posts that stud these 'ere southern peraroes. What sort o' lookin' man war their leader? or did ye see?"

"We did not see him," St. Kenelm replied.

"I did," said Octavia; "he was a young man. After I left the train, he overtook me on the road, and we traveled and conversed together. He was gentlemanly and courteous, and dressed in a handsome uniform."

"You don't say!" said the ranger. "If they'd a-turned in and helped the Ingins butcher you folks, I'd 'a' swore then it war the outlaw gang of Red Rob, the Boy Road-agent. Did he tell you his name, Octav'?"

"He did not," replied the maiden, her face betraying some inward emotion which did not escape the eyes of old Aunt Shady.

"Chile ob my ole heart," she said, approaching the maiden and gazing down into her face with a lugubrious look, "what under de sun and shinin' stars ails you? Ar'n't you in love, chile, now say?"

Octavia blushed crimson and in a tone a little reproving, replied:

"You must be crazy, Aunt Shady. Of course I love you and brother Albert."

"Now, honey, do be keeful, and don't forget what de Bible says 'bout Andynius and Sapph'ry. Aunt Shady alers know dat you lub her and brudder Al, but you neber blush 'bout it dat way. No, chile, your ole aunty knows dar am sumthin' wrong wid dat heart ob you'n, and to-morrow I'll look into it. I'll sift it out, chile. I jist believe dat young feller you seed on de road to Cornjose has gwine off wid your heart, and—"

"Oh, Aunt Shady, do be still," interrupted Octavia, a little provoked.

"Well, missus," said the old negress, relaxing into silence.

"If you do stop at Conejos," Dakota Dan

said, "you want to keep yer eyes on yer mules, yer hands on yer pockets and yer breeches in yer boot-tops, or, by Judea, them Mexicans will steal 'em. They're the dirtiest thieves that ever wore ha'r—cowardly, too, as any coyote that ever howled in the dark. They'd stab a dead man in the back and think they'd got revenge. But if you jist show 'em your spunk—the white of yer eye—let 'em believe you'd rather fight than eat, then they'll keep their places."

"Then the village is composed altogether of Mexicans, is it?" asked young Boswell.

"Mexican half-breeds, with a sprinklin' of American roustabouts, Dutch, Irish, Scotch and so on."

"Do they all steal?"

"No; jist the 'greasers.'"

"I should think they could be broke of that," said Tom Gilbert.

"They can, lad. It's no use sayin' a Mexican can't be civilized and induced to quit bad tricks. When I war up to Denver City I seed as thievin' a pack of 'em as ever robbed a hen-roost, eternally cured of stealin'. They war ketched in the act, tried and sentenced to be hung up by the heels over night. The judge said that stealin' war a disease with them—said it prevailed in the States to some extent; and was called 'kleptomony,' or 'keep-the-money,' or suthin' like that; and said the only thing that'd cure it was an application of 'persersimtheelsoverhedum,' or some big Latin name I couldn't figure out, that sounds like that. At any rate ropes war provided and the diseased gentlemen marched down into 'Yoo-ee Gulch.' There the heels of the light-fingers were elevated heavenward, and securely fastened to the limbs of a majestic ole pine tree. Their heads jist teched the ground, and the way them invalids bellered for mercy and pawed the ground would a made a buffer-bull blush to the tips of his horns. I tell ye what ole Yoo-ee jist boomed; but, boys, it war a good idea. The judge war rite. It cured them Mexicans of 'kleptomony,' and made quiet men of them."

"Indeed?" said Major St. Kenelm, failing to read the twinkle in the old ranger's eyes. "I should have thought they would have been all the worse after such humiliating punishment."

"Lord no, major! It never done any sich a thing, for in the night the coyotes and wolves went down into the gulch and eat their heads off close up to their heels."

A roar of laughter followed the old ranger's story, and it was some time before quiet was restored. When it was, however, the ranger rose to his feet, and turning to his dog said:

"Come, Humility, we'd better go out and circle the camp, hadn't we?"

Humility licked his chops, rose to his feet, and crept softly away at the heels of his master.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PHANTOM AZTECS.

FIERCELY, desperately and deadly waged the conflict between the mysterious old man, Basil Walrayment, and his two companions on one side, and a horde of Ute savages on the other, there in the solitude of the San Juan valley, with the pall of night above and around them. The three white men seemed endowed with superhuman strength and shielded by an invisible hand. The Utes were all around them, surging to and fro, a living vortex. The air above their heads was a broad and continual glare of flashing tomahawks. Steel met steel in deadly clash and ring. Weapons flew through the air in every direction, knocked from the savages' hands by the sweeping gun-barrels of the miners.

The Indians could easily have shot them down, but it seemed as though they were willing to sacrifice a score of warriors that the whites might be taken alive. The dead and wounded were trampled under foot by their advancing comrades—a few moments more and by the sheer force of numbers they overwhelmed the three brave men, who, borne to the earth, were soon securely bound hand and foot. Then they were permitted to rise to their feet, and contrary to all they had ever heard of before of Indian customs, they were blindfolded. But no sooner was this done than they heard a voice speaking English and directing the movements of the savages through an interpreter, in the crowd that still surged and howled around them. This convinced the captives that a white man had led the war-party into the valley.

Several minutes were taken up in the construction of litters upon which to convey the dead and wounded back to the village; but this done, and all secure, the procession started on its journey through the lonely halls of the grim old forest.

The captives walked with great difficulty, for the bonds upon their ankles would not admit of a full step. And like animals, they were led by means of a rope placed around each one's neck.

Only the soft tread of the many feet, the rustle of a bush, and the faint murmur of the foliage overhead, broke the solemn silence of the night.

Many and bitter were the thoughts of the captives as they trudged on through the woods—whether they knew not. Thus in one brief hour had all their hopes of the future, whatever they were, been shattered by the hand of fate. All their dreams of wealth had vanished, and they had awakened to the horrible fact that they were no longer masters, but doomed prisoners.

For weary miles they journeyed on through

the woods. To the captives each mile seemed a league. Pain caused by walking lengthens distance fourfold, and crowds minutes into moments if a certain length of time is to end that suffering. As they traveled on, they became aware of one thing; that most of their captors had taken another route, or else had fallen behind, and that most, if not all, of those remaining were white men. If so, they were satisfied the men were outlaws. As if to settle the question, a halt was suddenly ordered, when a man came up to the captives, and in a low, muffled voice, intended to be solemn, he said:

"Strangers, you are the captives of the Phantom Aztecs, upon whose sacred soil your infidel feet have intruded. You stand at the gate that opens to admit us to the temple in which the judgment hall is open for your reception."

A ponderous door creaked on its rusty hinges. The captives were conducted into an inclosure where they could almost feel the dismal gloom of the place. They walked upon a floor of solid stone that was carpeted with the dust and mold of ages; and it at once occurred to the mind of Basil Walraymond that they were inside of one of those dismal old buildings in Quivira ruins.

They followed the passage some distance—at times over an uneven and slippery floor—and finally turned an angle into another passage or hall, which they traversed until a door disputed further advance. This, however, was at once opened, and the captives were ushered into an apartment which they knew must be more capacious by the purity of the surrounding atmosphere.

The three men were now seated upon a low wooden bench, side by side, when one of the captives addressed them thus:

"You are now at the bar of the judgment hall of the Phantom Aztecs. The most high judge sits before you who will preside over your trial and judge you accordingly. Behold!"

The blindfolds were all suddenly removed from the captives' eyes. The glare of lights dazzled them for a moment, but soon becoming accustomed to the change, they looked upon a scene well calculated to fill them with silent terror.

The room in which they sat was a large one, and its crumbling walls and ceiling verified the former suspicion of Basil Walraymond—they were within one of those ancient ruins still to be found in the valley of the San Juan. There were evidences in abundance, however, of its having undergone general repairs to make the place inhabitable; and in the lurid glare of the torches that lit up the room, it presented a weird, solemn aspect.

Around the room were seated a dozen persons, all wearing long, dirty white robes and masks of snow-white whiskers reaching to their waists. A covering resembling a hood was upon each head. At one end of the room was upon a kind of dais sat the chief priest of the Phantom Aztecs, looking down upon the captives with an assumed benignity. He wore no mask; for his long gray beard corresponded well with those of his masked comrades, and gave him a ghostly appearance in the dim light. A curiously-wrought crown was upon his head. Before him was a stone altar, and upon this burned a lamp that gave forth a sickly blue light. In this light, however, the three captives studied closely the face of the "most high." It was a face wearing the stamp of fifty or more busy years. The features were strong in their characteristic outlines, but hard, cold and cruel. The eyes were of a fiery black, and shot their burning glances from beneath heavy, sullen brows.

There was little in the man's looks calculated to inspire hope in the breasts of the captives. They knew, of course, that the "Phantom Aztecs" faces was a glaring imposition, around which had been thrown a mantle of false solemnity and an air of mystery. They felt satisfied that if those venerable masks and priestly robes were thrown aside, a band of fierce and desperate outlaws would stand revealed.

Our friends were also satisfied that they were not the first men that had been led captives into that room, for the "phantoms" went about their business in a way that showed experience.

As soon as the prisoners had been seated, and time given them to impress their minds with the mysteries of their surroundings, the "most high priest" arose with solemn dignity, and read, in a low, measured tone, or pretended to read, from a roll of ancient-looking parchment, these words:

"The Phantom Aztecs are the chosen people of God. Away amid the fertile valleys, surrounded by snow-capped mountains, of a new world, have they planted their seed and their faith, and written upon the tablets of stone the history of their deeds. But now in the midst of their prosperity, what comes? The Spanish desert—its dagger in one hand and peace offering in the other. The people of the chosen few received them, and at the same time a blow in the heart. Ruin followed. The temples of the sun have been destroyed and the watch-towers of the mountains gone out. But their spirits are still here—here to-night, where three hundred years ago we walked in flesh. They shall still rule over the land and sit in judgment upon the intruder till our land once more teems with wealth and prosperity. So saith the spirit, that is the guide to the hand that writes this communication, on the spirit-land."

He laid the "ancient" document of the inspired spirit aside, and said:

"Three men have been taken captives on the sacred soil of the Aztecs. Each and all of them will be given a chance to speak—to plead for his life. If you do not desire to speak, it becomes the duty of the 'Judge of the Phantom Aztecs' to pass judgment upon you."

The "judge" sat down when the mysterious old man, Basil Walraymond, rose to his feet and said, in a calm, unmoved tone:

"Sir, I scorn your immensity—this mock and cowardly tribunal I despise. You are a set of villains—thirteen of you too cowardly to face three helpless men whom you engaged a hundred savages to capture. You and your allies have shot down innocent men who never thought of harming you, then you hide your faces beneath masks and your forms beneath gowns of white. But mind you, sirs! and the old man glanced menacingly and fiercely at the different forms around the room, "the eye of the inscrutable God sees every face here, and searcheth every heart!"

The form of the noble old man seemed to grow taller in its majestic grandeur, while his face was surrounded with a halo of that exalted humanity which fills the heart with profound admiration, and which seemed to radiate the sublimity of a soul bearing the image of its Maker.

When Basil Walraymond sat down, the judge again arose, and in a tone that trembled with manifest fear or anger, said:

"That captive has insulted the tribunal of Phantom Aztecs, and I pronounce upon him the sentence of death in the tiger-pit at midnight! Has the other captives anything to say?"

"I wish to say—" said young Sheridan,

springing to his feet, but here his lips became sealed, as if his courage had failed him in further utterance. This was not the cause, however, of brave Asa Sheridan's sudden silence. Behind the judge was a small square opening in the wall, intended, no doubt, as a window, and in this opening he saw an object suddenly appear, that seemed to seal his lips with the silence of death, and petrify his form to a stony rigidity.

CHAPTER X.

WHAT SHERIDAN SAW.

A white face, set in a frame of golden hair, and clear cut as an ancient cameo. Dark blue eyes with long, drooping lashes. Rippled lips, to which was pressed a snowy, tapering finger. In fact, the face of a lovely young girl was the object that had appeared at the opening behind the judge's stand, and sealed the lips of Asa Sheridan. Her finger was pressed upon her lips, and this, and the imploring look on her beautiful face, was plainly significant as an order for silence on his part. He obeyed the silent appeal with an involuntary impulse; and the face instantly disappeared.

"Why does this captive hesitate?" demanded the judge of the Phantom Aztecs.

"Because I consider this court beneath my notice," responded Sheridan, seating himself. But he regretted his hasty words, the moment they were spoken. There was something that now threw an air of the deepest gravity and earnestness around the judgment hall to Sheridan. It was not the white robed figures, nor the emblems of mortality that decorated the walls in repulsive ghastliness, nor the ghostly light around them that had thus impressed him. It was that angelic face that he had seen at the window, and the order which the silent lips had given. But it was too late to recall his words now. The judge rose and said:

"I sentence that man to the Dungeon of Darkness. What has the other prisoner to say?"

"Nothing," replied Nathan Wolfe, "more than that I would give a great deal to fathom the secret of that Centaur we saw to-night in the valley."

"That man," said the "most high," "will be held in bonds for further trial."

And thus ended the court of the Phantom Aztecs. The lights were extinguished, and each of the captives led away in a different direction through the ruins.

The blindfold was replaced over Walraymond's eyes, and while it was being tied, the voice of the judge said to his companions in Spanish:

"Yo concieso que anciano."

But Basil Walraymond knew enough of the language to understand what the judge said; viz: "I know that old man."

It sent a shiver to the old man's heart. He recalled a bitter thought of the past. But he said nothing, nor showed signs of the terrible emotions surging in his breast.

He was conducted along a narrow, damp passage to a door which at once wheezed open its rusty hinges, and admitted the prisoner and his conductor into the open air; yet this air seemed filled with the resinous vapor of burning pine; and he could hear the crackle of fire, and the fluttering of the flames.

"You are now in the tiger-pit," said his conductor; "stand on your guard, señor."

Then the bandage was removed, and the glare of a dozen torches blinded the old man for full a minute; but when his eyes had become accustomed to the light, he glanced around him. He saw that he was in an open courtyard, around which rose the massive walls of one of those ancient ruins which had doubtless been used by its founders as a temple or monastery. The main entrance—an arched doorway—was blocked up with stone. On three sides, the building had crumbled to ruins, leaving only about ten feet of the basement walls standing. On the fourth side rose the old building from which he had just come, and which looked as though it might tumble down at any moment. These seemed, scarred and time-worn walls, however, bore evidence of skillful architecture.

Tall, rank weeds grew on the top of the ruins, and parasites clambered over and down the wall like a curtain of green, as if nature had designed that the deformities of the ruins should be concealed from view.

Blazing torches were fastened in niches and crevices in the wall, and these threw a wavering yellow light over the place.

The ground beneath the prisoner's feet was covered with white sand, and bore evidence of a late struggle—a bloody combat. And it seemed, however, to be a struggle that was over, and the footprints that were twisted deep into the sand, were dark spots where the thirsty earth had drunk up the life-blood of the contestants.

From the top of the ruins a dozen "Phantom Aztecs," in their venerable masks and white robes, looked down upon the old man, who stood there with folded arms, his tall, martial figure appearing Titanic in the uncertain glow of the dim torches.

Basil Walraymond knew not what was to come, but the footprints and dark stains on the ground carried his thoughts back to the gladiatorial days of ancient Rome. This gave him hope. He felt that he was the equal of any man in physical power and in the use of the sword. Fifty years had blunted none of his fine sensibilities nor reduced his wonderful energy and strength.

While he stood waiting for the appearance of his antagonist in the "tiger-pit," as the place had been designated, something bright flashed suddenly across his vision, and was immediately followed by the metallic clink of something against the wall behind him.

He turned around without manifesting the least curiosity and glanced downward. A small knife—a kind of poignard—lay at the base of the wall. What was this for? Was he intended to be made a prey to wild beasts, with a poignard only for a weapon?

As if in answer to the question, a small door in the basement of the wall on the east side of the courtyard was suddenly opened, and a huge gray panther, already goaded to frenzy by dripping blood and bloodshot eyes, sprang into the inclosure with Basil Walraymond!

(To be continued—commenced in No. 266.)

The Rival Brothers:

OR, THE WRONGED WIFE'S HATE.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING, AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "AWFUL MYSTERY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XX—CONTINUED.

Six struck from the hall-clock. A voice at Eve's ear an instant after made her bound; but it was only the servant who had come to her in the morning, and whom she had not heard cross the hall.

"Miss Eve, Miss Forest wants to know if you will come down to dinner?"

"Miss Forest: is she in her own room?"

"Oh, dear, no, Miss; she's been down-stairs all day."

Eve pressed her hand to her throbbing forehead.

"And is it I who am going mad?" she thought.

"You look poorly, Miss; your face is as white as a sheet," the girl said, pityingly, for all in the house liked the bright-eyed, pleasant-voiced young American girl. "I'm afraid you've caught cold up in this damp, nasty 'all, which it's as drafty as ever it can be. Do come down and take your dinner comfortably, Miss Eve."

Eve rose passively to follow her, her head all confused, feeling as if some one had struck her a blow and stunned her.

"Is Miss Forest alone?" she asked.

"No, Miss; Miss Hazel is with her, and you can't see an eye in her 'bad for crying, what ever be the matter."

Eve said no more—Hazel in trouble, too—it was all of a piece with the rest—all mystery to her. Miss Forest turned sharply upon her the moment she entered.

"I wish, Miss Eve Hazelwood, you would come to attend your meals in proper season, and not keep me waiting and the servants tramping all over the house for you! Mary, go up to Mr. D'Arville's room and ask him if he will please descend to dinner."

Eve's heart bounded. Oh, he was coming at last; he who never could be cruel or unjust, whose love would shield her, whose strength would support her, whose clear brain would find out what all this dreadful mystery of unkindness meant. Then her eye fell on Hazel, who sat in a corner; her ruddy face pale; her laughing brown eyes red and swollen; her bright, round, good-natured face clouded and sullen.

Yes, surely—that, I am sorry to say, is the only word for it. Hazel had cried until she could cry no longer, and had relapsed now into a state of unmitigated sulkiness. Eve went over eagerly to her.

"Hazel, dear, what is the matter with you? Are you sick—are you in trouble?"

She laid her hand on Hazel's shoulder, but that young lady started up and flung it off violently.

"Don't touch me! don't come near me, you mean, underhand, deceitful, treacherous, lying thing! I hate you—there."

A hysterical outburst of sobs wound up the outburst of temper. Eve recoiled as if she had been struck in the face, and a malicious smile dawned on the thin lips of Una Forest. Mary came suddenly in with a startled face and two letters in her hand.

"Oh, if you please, Miss Forest," she began, vehemently, "Mr. D'Arville is not in his room at all, and his bed hasn't been slept in all night, and his trunk and things is all packed, and here's two letters as I found on his table; and if you please, Miss, I do think as how he's been and gone away."

Una Forest crossed the room and snatched the letters out of the girl's hand. That she was excited, could be seen; for the fingers that tore open the one addressed to herself trembled perceptibly. As she read it, she uttered a sharp cry—a cry of bitter disappointment and mortification. Gone and left her! never to return, in all likelihood! Was this what she had plotted and planned for—was this the way she was to turn him against Eve, and keep him at her own side—was this the end of all her schemes? Surely her cunning had overshot the mark, and she had been foiled with her own weapons.

"Gone!" she cried out; "where did he go? Some of the servants must have seen him! Mary—"

But the address was interrupted by another cry, more startled than her own, and Eve was by her side.

"Gone!" she echoed, her lips pale, her eyes wild. "Gone, Miss Forest! Do you mean to say that Mr. D'Arville has left Hazelwood?"

Una Forest turned upon her like a tigress, her eyes flashing blue flame, her whole face livid with suppressed passion.

"He has gone! He has left Hazelwood forever, and it is you who have driven him from it! You wicked, you shameless, you disgraceful creature! He has gone, having, despising, abhorring you, as we all do now. Don't look at me so, you vile girl! with your miserable white face! Go to the man you met by night in the grounds; go to Paul Schaffer now, and exult with him over your work!"

Eve stood motionless, paralyzed, dumb. Mary stood with eyes and mouth agape, Hazel looked up with a frightened face, but Una Forest had lost the self-control of a life in an instant, the tide of passion, so seldom moved in that stagnant breast, all the more powerful for that very reason, swept everything before its resistless force. Five minutes later, she might be her own calm, ladylike, coldly-severe self again; now she was mad—mad with rage, jealousy, and disappointment. Now she must speak or die.

"You!" she half-screamed, "you wretched, dependent, nameless thing—living on the bounty of strangers—you, a miserable beggar for all your airs and graces—you, lower than the servants who wait on you, for they are honest, at least—you, with no right to the name you have disgraced, whose mother was a wretched street-walker of New York—you, who, springing from the filth and seum of the city streets, dare to reign here like a queen, and yet show the scum and dregs you spring from, by night and by stealth, it is you, you, who have driven him from the house, to which he had far more right than yourself, in which you never were wanted, from which you should have been sent long ago to earn your living, like any other pauper. I tell you, girl, I hate and despise you, and shall never rest until you are turned from the house you have disgraced; and then let the man you met by stealth protect you, or else follow your vile outcast mother's example, and—"

But she did not finish! There had been one wild shriek from Eve, and then she had turned and fled from the room, from the house, like a mad creature. Mad! for the time being she was so—the terrible words of Una Forest were ringing in her ears like death-knells, seared on her brain in letters of fire. She was conscious of nothing, only one wild, frantic, delirious idea of flying very far away, anywhere—anywhere out of the reach of that serpent-tongue. She knew not where she was going, what she was doing, only that they had driven her wild.

And so she fled on. Night was falling fast, a drenching rain with it, and everything was blurred in a mist of sudden fog. Heaven and earth were dark alike, but she saw not the darkness; her head was bare, her long hair fluttering in the night-wind, but she felt no cold, heeded not the soaking rain. Stumbling, slipping, falling, rising, and flying on again, that frantic figure rushed through the night and the storm, in and on, and over a very maniac, until at last exhausted nature gave way, and she sank down, prone on her face, on the soaking

grass. She never thought where she was; in that first delirium she did not care. And so there, with the dismal night falling, with the rain drenching her through, Eve Hazelwood, who had risen that morning happy, loving, and beloved, lay at night a homeless, friendless outcast.

Oh, truly it had been said, "We know not what a day may bring forth."

CHAPTER XXI.

BLACK MONKS.

She did not faint; lying there prostrate, with the rain beating upon her, and the wind fluttering her hair and garments—she was yet conscious. Perhaps it was that very wind and rain, cooling her burning brow, that kept her so; but for a time nature was so completely exhausted that she was unable to move. Then slowly, as the first mad excitement and delirium died out, all the horror of her situation dawned upon her. It was night—a tempest was raging, she was friendless and homeless—without where to lay her head. Must she stay in this dreadful place all night—must she lie here and die? Oh, if death would only come at once! Eve wished for it then, as we all wish for it in our first moments of sinful despair.

What is there left to live for now? All love—and love makes up all that is worth living for to some—had faded out of her life, and why should she wish to drag on a dreary and unloved life? Ah! Eve could not remember then, in her first bitterness of despair, that

"There is a love that never fails When earthly loves decay."

Heaven and earth, that dismal night, looked black alike.

A clock struck nine—the clock of the village church. She was in Monkswood, then, and near shelter, if she chose to ask for it. She raised herself on her elbow, pushed back the dripping masses of hair from her face, and looked round. Lights twinkled in the distance—stars of hope—from the cottage windows.

Eve was well known in Monkswood. She had been good to more than one poor sufferer there; her bright face had made sunshine in many a poor home; her sweet voice had whispered hope in many a sorrowful ear; her princely hand and heart had shared with them the last farthing she possessed. Yes, she could not die on the roadside this terrible night; she would go to some of these humble homes until to-morrow should come, and then she would fly—she knew not whither, cared not, either, so that it was far from Hazelwood.

Faint, dizzy, staggering, the girl rose up and toiled slowly on through the darkness and the rain. Now that the feverish excitement had passed away, the false strength it had lent her had gone with it, and she was so weak she could hardly totter. She had eaten nothing since early morning, and at the first cottage she came to, she dropped down on the doorstep, feeling that, if her life depended on it, she could not go one more step.

It was a poor place, this cottage, with thin doors and curtainless windows. Eve could hear voices within, and one—the voice of a man—had a strangely-familiar sound. She tried to think who it was, but her head felt all wrong and confused—memory would not come to her aid. She rose up again, resolved to see, before she asked for shelter, it might be one of those cruel enemies she had left, for all she could tell. The little window was uncurtained, the room bright with fire and candle-light—as humble within as without, too; but Eve saw nothing of that—her eyes were fixed on its three occupants. Surely, that old woman on the stool in front of the fire had a strangely-familiar face. Where had she seen her before? And that man—that tall gentleman wearing that well-known cloak, must be Senator Mendez, her Cuban friend. And that third face—ah! what sight of horror was that! her own face looking straight back at her—her own face as she saw it every day in the glass. There was a shrill shriek of affright, a heavy fall, and Eve Hazelwood had fainted for the first time in her life.

What a strangely confused and bewildered feeling is the return of consciousness after a swoon. Gentlemen, perhaps, not being of the fainting sex, know very little about it; but their sister-sufferers, being used to it, know the dizzy, disagreeable, distressed sense of vague bewilderment with which life and recollection come back. Every thing looks unusual; the most familiar objects unfamiliar; voices at our ear sound afar off, and the well-known home-faces strange and visionary like the rest. But when the fainter comes too in a strange room, where every thing is really unfamiliar—furniture, faces, voices and all—then she is, indeed, an object of pity.

It was Eve's case, as she rose up and looked round her. What large room was this, with its strange, antique furniture, its black oil-paintings, its wood fire burning on a marble hearth, its tall wax candles flaring on an inlaid table, huge tented bedstead looking like a house? Who were these three tall men looking at her, one of them sitting beside her holding her wrist, and who was that elderly lady in black dress and snow-white cap, watching her with such kind, compassionate eyes? What had happened, and where, could she say? She moaned out something vaguely to that effect, as she passed her hand over her forehead piteously, trying, poor child, to clear her mental vision.

"All right now," said the gentleman holding her wrist, dropping it and putting a glass to her lips; "I said you would come to presently! Drink this, my dear, and you will be as well as ever."

Eve drank as submissively as a little child. It was port wine, and helped her at once. She looked again at the man beside her, with new-born resignation in her great bright eyes.

"Are you, Mr. Holmes?" she asked, smiling.

"Of course, I am, my dear Miss Hazelwood," answered the village-surgeon, "How do you feel now? Like a giant refreshed—eh?"

"I feel better, thank you," very faintly; "though please to tell me where I am?"

"In a very nice place, Miss Eve, Black Monk's Priory," he answered, "and I am glad you are here."

"Black Monk's! Why—how?"

"There, don't get fidgety now. You fainted, you know, and we found you as dead as a door-nail; carried you off here, and brought you to life again. For further explanation, I must refer you to this gentleman here."

The gentleman thus evoked stepped forward and bent over her. Eve grasped his hand, with a glad cry—it was good to see that familiar face, where all was so strange and new.

"Senator Mendez," she cried out, holding his kind hands. "Oh, I am glad you are here."

"My own little Eve!" he said, a little huskily, "thank Heaven, you are conscious again. You feel better do you not?"

"Oh, yes! but I want to know how I came here! When did I faint, and what made me?"

Sensor Mendez turned to the third gentleman still in the background.

"My lord, if you and Mr. Holmes will kindly

leave me alone with Miss Hazelwood, for a few moments, I will give her all the explanation she requires. It will be better for her to know at once than work herself into a fever with wondering."

"Of course," said Lord Landsdowne, courteously, "for as many minutes as you please, Mrs. Roberts."

Mrs. Roberts, who was the housekeeper at Black Monks, obeyed the hint, and followed his lordship and the physician out of the room. Senator Mendez took the chair beside her, and looked into her great dark eyes, fixed so wistfully upon him, with a smile. There was something so infinitely kind and genial in his face, something so protecting and reassuring in his smile, that Eve's heart went out to him in a great cry.

"Oh, senator! what does it all mean? Am I going mad? Will you turn against me, too?"

"My dear child! turn against you! why should I?"

"Oh, I don't know! I have not done anything that I know of, but they all have turned from me—they all hate me now! I have no friend left in all the wide world, I think!"

"Not even me, Eve?"

She looked at him earnestly, longingly; truth, honor, manliness, friendliness—nay, love, shone in those deep dark eyes, in that gentle smile, in that tender handclasp. Yes, Eve had one friend left! Her face told him so, and his pleasant smile deepened.

"Thank you, my little girl," he said, as if she had spoken. "You are not quite deserted yet! And now tell me what they have been doing to you at Hazelwood—I think I half guess, though."

"I can't tell you what they have been doing to me—only that they have all turned against me, and Miss Forest—oh," Eve cried, passionately, "how shall I ever forget the dreadful things she said?"

"Humph! it was Miss Forest then, the little sleek, sharp-clawed cat! What did she say to you, Eve?"

"Dreadful things, senator, and Hazel told me, with a choking sob, 'that she hated me!'"

"The deuce she did! But Miss Forest, what did she say?"

Sensor, she said that I—that I—oh, I can't tell you," cried Eve, suddenly, covering her face with her hands, but not before he saw that sensitive face turn scarlet.

"Yes, you can, Eve; remember I am your only friend! Tell me, please! She said you did something very shocking, I suppose! She said you—"

"Senator, that I met Monsieur Schaffer in the grounds by night, and by stealth, and that she, and Hazel, and Monsieur D'Arville saw me with him there!"

Sensor Mendez gave a long, low whistle. "Whew! the little liar! and what did Hazel say?"

"That she hated me, and that I was a wicked, treacherous, deceitful creature!"

"Forcible language, upon my word! These little female angels, however, have the devil's own tongue. And Monsieur D'Arville—surely, he denied it!"

"Sensor," Eve said, her voice trembling pitifully, "he has gone away!"

"Gone! where?"

"To London, and is coming back no more." And here Eve's courage all failed, and her voice was lost in a tempest of sobs. The Cuban planter looked at her pityingly.

"My poor Eve! they have been conspiring up to me, I see! When did all this take place?"

"This morning, at breakfast, senator, Miss Forest commenced. 'I did not see her all day, or Hazel either; but when I went down to dinner, Monsieur D'Arville's letter, telling of his departure, was brought her; and I think it set her wild! It was then she said all those terrible things, until she nearly drove me mad!'"

"And you rushed out into the storm just as you were, and ran until you could run no longer, I suppose?"

"Yes, senator! And, oh, I don't know at all what it means, for I never left my room last night."

"Oh, you need not tell me that! I quite understand, and so does pretty Miss Forest, that you never set foot in the grounds with Paul Schaffer! Was that all she said to you?"

"No, senator—she spoke of my mother, of my dead mother, whom I never knew, and said things of her too frightful to repeat."

"The little —," Senator Mendez ground out the rest between his mustache, "said she was no better than she ought to be, I suppose, Eve?"

Eve hid her face, flushed again. But she was pouring out her whole heart to this man, and could not help it.

"She said I had no right there—no right, even to the name I bore."

"Indeed! Much she knows about it! Did she say anything of your father?"

"No, senator, she never spoke of him, but," Eve cried, struck by something in his face, "perhaps you knew him, senator! Oh, if you do—"

"There! there! don't get into a fright now! I did know your father when a young man, but never much good of him. He was a young scamp, and the less you know about him the better."

late; but I will be back again early to-morrow morning. And so, my baby, good-night!"

What a strange man he was! But Eve liked him and his hearty, fatherly manner; and once alone dropped where she sat into the heavy slumber of exhaustion, and never woke till morning.

The red sunrise was slanting rosy rays through the curtains when she opened her black eyes in this mortal life again, a little stiff and tired from her uncomfortable position, but thoroughly refreshed, and her own bright-eyed, clear-headed self again. But at her heart the dull pain still ached, heavy as lead it still lay in her bosom; no sleep could ever chase away the aching there.

She drew back the curtain from the window and looked out. Every cloud had gone, the sun was shining in a sky as blue and cloudless as—Una Forest's eyes! Far below she could see the village of Monkswood; the smoke curling up from the cottage chimneys, and the farms out over the road. Right below her was a rose-garden, hot with scarlet bloom; and the birds were piercing the air with their matin hymns.

It was all very charming, and Black Monk's was a delightful place, but how came she in it? She remembered now she had not found that out last night; she remembered, too, with a thrill, the face so awfully like her own, and she knew it was that made her faint.

She must wait now, she knew, till Señor Mendez came, to find out everything; so she bathed her face, brushed out her tangled curls, said her prayers—a little more fervently than usual, perhaps—and then sat down by the window to wait and think.

A clock, somewhere in the house, struck loudly ten. As its last echo died away, there was a knock at her door, and the old house-keeper entered.

"Oh, you are up?" she said, looking pleased; "and not quite so much like a corpse as you were last night! Do you feel better?"

"Very much better, thank you."

"Will you have breakfast here, or will you come down? My lord sent me up to see."

"I will go down," Eve said, in some trepidation. "Who is—any one there?"

"Only his lordship. My lady won't be back for a week."

"Is she away, then?" Eve said, very much relieved; for she instinctively disliked the supercilious, handsome Lady Landsdowne.

"Yes, Miss; she started for London yesterday morning. This is the breakfast-parlor."

They had been walking through a long hall and down a great flight of stairs while conversing, and soon the old lady opened a door and ushered Eve into a large and handsomely-furnished parlor, where Lord Landsdowne and a well-spread breakfast table were alone. He advanced to meet her with extended hand.

"I am glad to see you looking so much better, Miss Hazelwood! I trust you rested well last night."

"Thank you, my lord," said Eve, finding the title rather odd to her American tongue. "I did. I feel as well as ever this morning."

"That is right! We are to have a *tele-ate* breakfast, I find, this morning. Lady Landsdowne is in London, and Señor Mendez declined my invitation to breakfast. Pray be seated."

If Eve had never known before that wealth and rank do not constitute happiness, she might have found it out that morning by looking at Lord Landsdowne's face. It was the face of a saddened and disappointed man, of one who has made some great life-mistake. Yet it was kindly too; though he rarely smiled, his deep gravity was gentle; his melancholy patient. Eve felt sorry for him somehow, without very knowing why, and disliked the absent Lady Landsdowne more than ever.

During breakfast they talked of the weather, of yesterday's storm, and of Black Monk's.

"Would you like to see it?" he asked her, as they arose. "It is rather a gloomy old place, and considerably out of repair, but still worth looking at. I will be your cicerone, if you like. No one can do the honors of Black Monk's but a Landsdowne."

So they went through it—up and down grand old oaken staircases—through dark suites of painted rooms, through wainscoted halls, until Eve was tired out. It was a gloomy place, gloomier than Hazelwood even, all but one suite of rooms. They were my lady's; everything antique had been removed; everything modern, elegant and costly was there. Eve had never seen anything so beautiful before; but she looked in vain for one thing—a portrait of their owner.

"Is Lady Landsdowne's picture not here?" she asked at length, curiously; "I have not seen it anywhere in the house."

"No; she never had a picture taken—it is one of her whims; not even a photograph. And now, if you are not too tired, will you take a stroll through the grounds? The fresh air will do you good, after these damp and dreary old rooms."

Eve was very willing to leave the gloomy house for the bright sunshine and blessed breeze out of doors; so, with only a handkerchief thrown over her head, she went out with him into the grounds. Spacious they were; series, grapevines, deeparks, long avenues of stately trees, thickly wooded shrubberies, everything old and grand; but somehow the same show of gloom and solitude reigned without as within. Eve admired and praised all, as she could not help doing, but she turned away with a feeling of relief to Señor Mendez, galloping up the avenue. He jumped off his horse, and raised his hat.

"Allah be praised! the dead is alive again. I see quite another girl to the ghost of last night. My lord, was it coffee or the elixir of life you gave Miss Hazelwood at breakfast this morning?"

Lord Landsdowne smiled as he turned to go. "I shall leave Miss Hazelwood herself to answer that question. *Au revoir.*"

"Here's a bench," said Señor Mendez; "and you look tired, I think. Sit down and tell me how you feel."

Eve lifted her melancholy, dark eyes to his face for a moment, and then dropped them again.

"Oh, I feel very lonely, and dreary, and sad! How do you like Lord Landsdowne?"

"Very much."

"And my lady?"

"She is away."

"Oh, true; I had forgotten. And the place?"

"It is a very fine old place; but, oh, so desolate and gloomy! Even the sunshine does not seem to brighten it!"

"Sunshine! How can sunshine brighten a place like this—a place that is accursed!"

"Senior!" Eve cried, startled by the strong word.

"I repeat it—accursed! If ever a curse rested anywhere on earth, it does on Black Monk's! Can you not see it in its master's face?"

"You never mean to say," said Eve, still more startled, "that it is haunted?"

"Yes, I do; and by an incarnate imp of the Evil One himself! But don't look so white

about it, if you can help it. I don't know as this spirit of darkness has any power, or any will to injure you."

"I'm not going to remain here to tempt it," said Eve, tartly; "I am going away."

"Oh, are you? Where to, pray?"

"Anywhere—anywhere that I can earn a living. I will never go back to Hazelwood again."

"My dear girl, don't make any rash promises. Where do you wish to go—to back to Canada?"

"Oh, no! not there—not even to New York. I want to go to London. No one knows me there."

"And what will you do when you get to London?"

"Anything! Be a governess, a school-teacher, a seamstress, a housemaid, or anything by which I can earn a living."

Her eyes were flashing—her cheeks glowing—her voice ringing—but the phlegmatic gentleman beside her caught none of her excitement.

"A very laudable design, indeed, but don't be in a hurry. Suppose you wait until Lady Landsdowne comes home? These great ladies always want a companion, or something of that sort, and—"

"I wouldn't stay, if she did! I don't like this place, and I don't like Lady Landsdowne. I want to go far from here."

"Oh, that's the way of it, is it? Well, she may know some other great lady in Belgravia who wants a companion or a governess, and may get you the situation. Take my advice, and wait till she comes; there are worse places to stop in than Black Monk's."

"How did I ever come here?" asked Eve. "I remember seeing you through the cottage window that dreadful night, and that is all. How did I get here?"

"I heard you scream and fall, and so did another gentleman, driving home in his carriage. It was Lord Landsdowne, and he stopped to find out the matter; and, when we recognized the young lady, he insisted on putting her into the carriage and driving her home. You understand?"

"Yes; and what cottage was that you were in, and who were the two women?"

"What a pretty inquisitor it is! The two women were grandmother and granddaughter, and I went in out of the rain."

"Senior Mendez, I want to see that girl again. I thought it was my own face looking at me over the fire. We must look exactly alike."

Senior Mendez looked at her as if struck by a new idea.

"Why, yes; now you mention it, I do think there is a slight resemblance. Rose—I think I heard the old lady call her Rose—Rose has black eyes and curls, and is about your height; but she is browner in the skin, and has redder cheeks, and not so much to say! And now I must leave you for awhile. I am going to Hazelwood."

"To Hazelwood?"

"Don't faint! I won't tell them you are here! I want to see what they are about over there, and won't say a word about you. Good-bye for awhile. Don't excite yourself. Wait till my lady comes home. It will be in a few days—and who knows what the upshot will be! Keep up a good heart. Remember what I said before. Every cloud has its silver lining."

"But the lining is on the wrong side," said poor Eve, wistfully; "and it is very long and dreary to wait."

"Perhaps you won't have so long to wait—who knows! Wait anyway until her ladyship comes back, and we will see what will follow. Wait, Eve, wait and see!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 257.)

False Faces:

OR,
THE MAN WITHOUT A NAME.

A MYSTERY OF THE GREAT METROPOLIS.

BY GEO. L. AIKEN,

AUTHOR OF "A LIVING LIE," "SNARED TO DEATH," "BERNAL CLYDE," "KIMA'S CAPTIVITY," "STELLA, A STAR."

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE FRIEND MASK.

Two weeks passed swiftly away, and Genni Bartyne heard nothing from the detective. It was evident that he had not succeeded in discovering the lurking places of the False Faces.

In this time Etta and Chester saw much of each other, and their first favorable impressions were strengthened.

Kate Veshlage, in her own mind, decided that it was a plain case of love at first sight, and sighed, enviously, for the return of the handsome young detective. But as he did not come, she endeavored to divert her mind by getting up a flirtation with Ossian, and was snubbed in such a grim manner that she drew back utterly defeated, and highly incensed, with a lasting spite against the gaunt superintendent; but her disdain did not affect Ossian Plummer's peace of mind.

He had suggested to Genni Bartyne that he should now return to the oil wells, there being no further occasion for his services in the city. Bartyne, however, was not disposed to let him go.

"Remain with us yet, Ossian," he said. "We have not reached the end. Everything goes on as it should at the walls. You receive letters regularly from Almira, you say, and her reports are favorable, are they not?"

"Oh, yes."

"Then wait a little longer here—wait until these False Faces are brought to justice, as I feel they speedily will be. This young man is on their track, and I have great faith in him."

"So have I!"

"He'll catch them yet!"

"I trust so!"

And so Ossian Plummer remained, nothing loth to stay.

The cosy parlor was lighted by two gas-jets, covered with globes of glass, which projected from the wall, between the two windows, and on either side of the large mirror.

These windows were on a level with the floor, and led out upon a veranda. This veranda was some five feet above the garden, and was reached by a flight of steps in front of the door.

Though early in October, the night was quite warm—almost oppressively so, for the sky was cloudy with the presage of a coming storm, and neither moon nor stars shed their luster through the gloom.

In various positions in the parlor our family group was seated. All was bright within, in strong contrast to the gloom without.

Chester Starke and Etta sat side by side, he holding an illustrated periodical in his hand, and turning over the pages for her examination. Kate occupied a chair on the other side of Chester, near enough to take an occasional glance at the engravings, but her attention

was chiefly engaged by a peculiar kind of needle and a ball of white cord, with which she wove a sort of lace, or edging, for trimming.

Ossian Plummer sat in an easy-chair in the corner, apparently intent upon the perusal of a magazine, but his eyes wandered over and anon from the page, and rested smilingly upon Chester and Etta. They even condescended to take Kate's form in, as if the grim superintendent was comparing the two girls together; and the contrast between them now was more strongly marked than ever.

Their wardrobes had been greatly augmented since their arrival in the new house; both were nicely dressed, and in a becoming manner.

But Kate lacked that air of ease and refinement which seemed to pertain naturally to Etta; though some men might have preferred the bold beauty of her face, with its sharp black eyes and irregular features, to the modest and retiring look, verging almost upon timidity, so characteristic of Etta's face, with its fair complexion, dove-like eyes, and radiant hair.

Genni Bartyne, seated in a rocker by the center-table, with the evening paper upon his knees, studied the young people attentively, and less covertly than Ossian Plummer.

His eyes lingered pleasantly upon Etta's fair head, and then strayed to Chester Starke's dark looks, and frank face. He read the gentle, yielding disposition in one face, and the strong and self-reliant will in the other.

"They were made for each other," he reflected. "They are just suited—a splendid couple. And they are finding out each other's hearts rapidly. Well, let it be so. I would not ask a better husband for my girl. Chester shall take the place of the son I have lost. Shall I ever find him? I fear not. He must be dead."

This reflection sent him into a deep reverie. Etta and Chester conversed over the pictures, Kate putting in a remark vivaciously at every opportunity.

Something she said provoked a laugh from Etta and Chester, and roused Genni Bartyne from his reverie.

"That's a smart girl," he mentally commented. "A free and happy disposition that takes no thought of care for the morrow. The world rests lightly on her young shoulders. I've tried to get up a match between her and Ossian, but it doesn't work at all. He seems to have become a woman-hater, and to grow more grim and gaunt as he grows older."

His eyes again rested upon Etta's face, with a clinging look of affection.

"How like her mother she is!" he murmured. "Heaven shield her from so sad a fate as hers was!"

With this thought his memory traveled backward and reviewed the bitter past.

Ossian Plummer would turn a leaf, read a few lines, and then his restless eyes wandered about the room, taking in the face of each of its occupants before they settled down upon the page again.

The little clock upon the mantelpiece struck the hour of ten, sounding in it clear, bell-like notes.

The darkness grew more dense without. The wind sighed gently in at the open window.

"How close it grows!" exclaimed Genni Bartyne. "I think we are going to have a storm."

"Shouldn't wonder," returned Ossian.

His chair was in the corner, near one of the windows, and he glanced through it. He made a quick motion as if about to spring from his chair, but a second thought restrained him.

He raised the magazine before his face as if to read again, but he did not do so; he merely used it as a screen to hide his face while his eyes watched the veranda with the keenest interest.

He was confident that he had seen some object protrude above the rail of the veranda, and it appeared to him that that object was a man's head. But he was not sure. He watched to satisfy his doubts, to secure the spy upon their privacy, if his doubts should prove correct.

Ossian's vision was of the keenest, and his vigilance was soon rewarded with results. Again the object arose above the veranda rail, coming up out of the gloom below and beyond.

He could now distinguish that it was a head—but such a strange one that he was fascinated by a kind of awe as he gazed upon it. It was of a dark red hue, surmounted by two sharp short horns of a bluish color, not unlike steel, and the features were those of a grinning fiend.

For a moment Ossian wondered what this singular apparition could mean, but when he saw an arm extended and something at its extremity glistering in the light that streamed from the windows, he divined the murderous purpose.

With a loud cry he sprang to his feet and threw himself before Genni Bartyne. A pistol-shot was heard without; there was a flash of fire, and Ossian fell at the foot of the aroused and startled Bartyne.

Etta and Kate both screamed in alarm. Chester Starke plucked his revolver from his pocket—he had worn it constantly since the day of Etta's rescue—and dashed out upon the veranda.

He heard the sound of retreating footsteps, and the gate close. He fired two shots at random, and then ran down the steps in pursuit.

After her first alarm, Kate ran out upon the veranda. She came back with a mask in her hand; a red mask representing a fiend's face, with horns projecting from it.

Chester came back from his useless pursuit. He did not find any traces of the assassins in the street, nor did he think he had been injured by the shots he had fired.

He found Genni Bartyne supporting Ossian's head upon his knee. Ossian's face was ghastly, his eyes closed, and there were red blood-stains upon his shirt bosom.

"Is he hurt?" inquired Chester, anxiously.

"Yes, yes, and badly too, I fear," answered Bartyne, anxiously. "Here's blood upon his breast. Poor fellow! he threw himself before me, and received the bullet intended for me. Let me open his shirt and see if I can find the wound."

Bartyne undid Ossian's cravat and collar, and opened his shirt at the breast, seeking for the wound from which the blood was slowly oozing through on the white linen.

"Great heavens!" exclaimed Bartyne, in sudden amazement.

They were all startled by his manner.

"What is it?"

"Is he killed?"

"Have you found the wound?"

These were the questions that burst simultaneously from their lips.

"No, no—it is not that," replied Bartyne, excitedly. "But—but—"

He hesitated strangely.

"But what?" they all cried.

"This is not Ossian!"

"Not Ossian?" they echoed.

"What could he possibly mean?"

"No; it is Almira!"

"Almira?"

"Yes; Almira, dressed in Ossian's clothes."

"I thought she was a woman when she kissed me!" exclaimed Etta.

"I might have known she was, when she wouldn't kiss me!" added Kate.

They all gazed curiously at the wounded woman. Bartyne was the first to recover from the shock of this great surprise.

"Quick, quick, Chester! run for the nearest surgeon!" he cried. "If there is a chance to save her life, it must not be neglected."

"By no means!" answered Chester; and he caught up his hat and hurried from the house.

Almira moaned feebly, and made a fluttering movement with her eyelids.

"Heavens! I fear she is dying!" cried Bartyne, tremulously.

Almira's eyes opened, and her glance told him she had heard his words—and they told him more than that, for at the portals of death she cared not to hide the secret of her heart from him.

Bending close to her face, his eyes looking into hers, he read the story of her great love for him, with a strange thrill.

"Yes, Peter, I'm dying," she murmured. "I came here because I knew I should be of more use to you than Ossian, and I have been. They've killed me, but I've saved you, and that will be a great blessing to me where I'm going."

"Oh, Almira, you must live!"

"Tain't no use, Peter; I'm dreadful faint, and I know I'm hurt bad." Her voice grew much fainter. "I must tell you something before I go. The detective, Ray—"

"Well, what of him?"

"Tain't—ah!"

The gaunt form quivered, and her head slipped from Bartyne's knee to the carpet. Then she lay perfectly still.

"She's dead!" cried both the girls, appalled.

Death had never approached them so nearly before.

A hum of voices now arose without. The neighborhood had been aroused by the sound of the pistol shots, and a curious throng of men, women and boys gathered in front of the house.

Then heavy footsteps sounded on the steps.

"Heavens! we shall have a mob here!" cried Bartyne. "Send them away, Kate."

Kate hastened to the door to obey his bidding, but returned on the instant, followed by a policeman.

"What has happened here?" he demanded.

"Anybody shot?" answered Bartyne, hurriedly.

"Yes, yes, answered Bartyne, hurriedly. "Please send away the crowd, and I will explain what has taken place."

The policeman went to the door and ordered the people away. Those who had followed him to the steps retreated to the sidewalk, but they lingered there, reluctant to depart without having their curiosity gratified.

The policeman returned to the room.

"Is he dead?" he inquired.

"Not yet, I think," replied Bartyne, as his hand rested over Almira's breast. "The heart still beats."

"Have you any idea who did this?" asked the policeman.

"Yes, it was those villains!" answered Bartyne, fiercely.

"What villains?"

"That accursed gang of False Faces!"

"Yes, and here's one of them that they left behind!" cried Kate, showing the mask, which she still clutched in her hand.

All stared surprisedly at the fiendish face which she exhibited.

"Hut this may lead to something," exclaimed the policeman.

He took the mask and examined it.

Chester Starke now arrived, accompanied by a surgeon. He had been fortunate enough to find one at home who resided near them.

The crowd again surged up to the door. The policeman placed the mask upon the table and went out to drive them back. They retreated as before. He took his station at the gate to prevent any further intrusion, and the throng, finding that they were not to be permitted to know any thing about the matter, gradually dispersed.

The surgeon knelt down beside the motionless form of Almira to make an examination of the wound.

"A wound!" he exclaimed, surprisedly, looking up in Bartyne's face.

He was evidently puzzled by this discovery.

"Yes, yes; is the wound fatal?" replied Bartyne.

"I can not say until I probe it. But she still lives, and you know the old saying, 'while there's life there's hope.'"

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed Bartyne, fervently. "I would not have her die for a million of dollars! Save her life, and your fee shall be a rich one."

"I'll do my best. Let's get her in a bed as soon as possible."

"Certainly. Kate light the gas in her room. Chester, you and I can carry her up."

"Gently—gently—she's lost blood enough already," urged the surgeon, as Kate sprang quickly up the stairs, and Bartyne and Chester raised Almira from the floor.

With all tenderness the wounded woman was conveyed to the chamber above, which she had occupied when wearing her brother's name and garments, and placed upon the bed. Then Bartyne and Chester retired, leaving Kate and Etta to assist the surgeon.

Bartyne and Chester returned to the parlor.

"You have had a narrow escape, sir," said Chester.

"Yes, my boy; I owe my life to her. What devotedness!" answered Bartyne, with deep feeling. "Oh, that she may live, so that I can repay her!"

"I have always considered Almira an oddity; but who would have dreamed of such a freak as this?"

"If we had not been 'simpletons' we might have guessed it. The advice she gave us was too shrewd to come from Ossian; I thought he had improved, and this explains it. But they are so much

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The Arm-Chair.

We are happy to announce that Capt. Mayne Reid is on his feet again, notwithstanding the unfavorable reports concerning his late illness. His exceedingly tough constitution carried him through. His illness was caused by his old Mexican war wound. The captain contemplated an early visit to America, but has, for the present, abandoned all idea of again traversing the Atlantic. We presume he will resume his pen labors once more.

We are now presenting a series of papers—"Leaves from a Lawyer's Life"—written by a well-known Western practitioner, who, doubtless, speaks from his own experience. The "leaves" certainly are records of a somewhat eventful experience, and will add a pleasant feature to our pages.

A YOUNG man, in Easton College, writes, after having asked a question which is answered in the proper department:

"To me and many of my friends here your answers to correspondents are interesting and very useful. You help us over many knotty points. Other papers put in so much old stuff that it shows plain enough it is just made up questions and answers."

We cannot speak for other papers, paying no attention to the merits or demerits of their departments devoted to questions and answers. The SATURDAY JOURNAL, we can say, gives a great deal of attention to its querists and correspondents, endeavoring to enlighten on all subjects and points where information is solicited. Of the usefulness of this portion of our paper we have ample evidence—not only in the increasing number of queries, but in such expressions as that quoted above. It is unnecessary to say we shall keep the department up to the best standard for interest, usefulness and personal helpfulness.

In answer to a Philadelphia correspondent, we have to say: The SATURDAY JOURNAL bases its success on merit only. Pictures, or stories of a questionable order, may give a circulation for a time, but the steady increase comes through no such means. The SATURDAY JOURNAL, though young in years, stands ahead of all but one or two of its competitors in the number of its steadfast friends, those who read the best class of family story papers. When we do give a "picture" we hope it will not be a pure waste of ink, as so many now being presented certainly are.

A good paper does not require these gratuities to hold its readers and patrons. Proof sufficient of this is that the *New York Ledger*, which leads all in circulation, gives no gratuities or picture prizes. That the SATURDAY JOURNAL has been steadily increasing in circulation, while most of the popular weeklies have been losing, is, we think, good proof that something else than gifts are essential to success.

Sunshine Papers.

Will Some One Tell Me?

Will some one tell me why every one says "Poor Tom!" Dick or Harry, when Tom, Dick or Harry, having been bound by those flowery ropes that Cupid can so deftly twist, and that are often transformed by the wand of Time into chains—matrimonial, is suddenly set free? Pray why do not people say "Poor Molly!" or Polly, or Dolly?

Why is it that Molly gets no sympathy and Tom gets all? Will some one tell me? Is it possible that, in this age of advanced philosophy, science and physiology, there are those who believe that Molly is a creature devoid of heart, feeling, sensibility, and yet able to live on like her sisterhood? And if such a thing is possible, why should it be taken for granted that only women are subject to so phenomenal an existence, and never men?

There are Harry and Dolly. They were engaged a year. It was considered a fine match for Dolly. She would gain wealth, position, and a devoted husband—or, to make my climax perfect, for I have very stupidly reversed the order in which it should appear to agree with generally accepted ideas—a devoted husband, position, and wealth! She was caressed, and petted, and courted, not because she was Miss Dolly, but because she was to become Mrs. Harry. Now Dolly was very young; as she grew rapidly into womanhood, she knew that she would do Harry and herself a great wrong if she pledged him, for all the

exigencies of their united lives, a wife's love when it was but a sister's. Harry she saved from misery—who, earthly, can tell how great! Her self she resigned to the bearing of a far heavier burden—the acceptance of the daily trials that made up a lot for her happy; the giving up of sweet ties, of pleasant friends, of a protecting devotion, of a passion pure and true and intense in its degree; the submission to a storm of remark, censure, scorn, hatred; the galling consciousness of slight social ostracism—a knowledge that she had wounded her stamp and must wear the scar, though it was a stamp of vaguely-defined ignominy to those who saw it. And though all this, to a girl of any heart, any pride, any sensitiveness, means acute, sickening pain, who can be found to say "Poor Dolly!" Why is it that for Harry—handsome, gay, brilliant, successful, the pride of his home, the pet of his acquaintances, the idol of young ladies—alone is any pity felt? Will some one tell me why Dolly cannot share in the sympathy so generously bestowed upon "Poor Harry!"

And there is Dick and Polly. Dick was desperately devoted to Polly, who is as tall and comely and entertaining a damsel as you will ordinarily find. Polly had been comely, scientifically impartial to her gentlemen friends until this wayward, witty, fascinating Dick lay siege to her trusting, loving, womanly heart; then she succumbed. Perhaps Dick never meant she should fall in love with him; perhaps he did. At all events he visited her with an ardent suitor's regularity; took her to drive, to church, and to entertainments; engaged board at the same hotel for the summer. And, no doubt—for it is mighty pleasant occupation to most men, and among masculinity's lengthy list of virtues is not found that of sacrificing a pleasure because, perchance, it may prove an evil to some one else—occupied himself through those long sunny days that he and Polly spent floating on the lake, and wandering over wooded mountainsides, in talking the sweetest of nonsense to each other—for nonsense can be sweet, ay, very! And when he indorsed that summer's sweet suppositions by the same unvarying devotion on their return, was it strange, or silly, or at variance with the trustfulness and gladness and joyous desire of sympathy that marks true young womanhood, that Polly should let her friends understand that she was engaged—even though Dick had not said in so many conventional, condensed, emphatic words—"Will you marry me, Polly?" And who is to say he did not? Why should his word be believed more than Polly's?

Well, he tells Polly he has no intentions of marrying her; they are not suited to each other, and he regrets that she should have mistaken his friendship for love. Polly has first hysterics, then refuses to go out, gets thin and white and nervous, is really ill, and refuses to entertain or see company.

Do people say of her, "Poor Polly?" Not a bit of it! They say, "What a fool that girl is making of herself!" They ridicule her illness because it is for him; they think she deserves to be sick for making such a time over a lover; they declare she was forward, and silly, and weak, to consider herself engaged to him, to love him so, and to show that she loved him! They do not once pity the heart that has been outraged, the girl's health shattered, the faith and trust turned to bitterness and distrust, the deadly pain that wounded womanliness, and forced self-contempt, and knowledge of scornful criticism, brings!

And Dick? He is elevated to the pedestal of martyrdom by all who know him; and becomes doubly irresistible to young ladies! The gentlemen say of him—"Poor Dick! how he did get drawn in by that girl; and what a guy she is making of herself!" The ladies—"Poor Dick! how he must hate to have that girl act so ridiculously over him; and what a disgrace it is to her to have got so fond of him and let every one see it!"

"Poor Tom!" "Poor Dick!" "Poor Harry!" The dear creatures! They have all sympathy until some one will tell me why Molly and Polly and Dolly should not share in it!

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

"WHATSOEVER YE WOULD," ETC.

AMONG all the redeeming attributes with which humanity is blessed, kindness to our fellow beings should rank first. Let me in this place tell you a little incident in regard to it—a true incident—which shows what kindness one person can bestow upon another in a noble manner. A young friend, not too well off in this world's goods, but who strives hard to win all he can, once undertook the agency for a paper. In his wanderings he stopped before a village hotel where several city boarders were airing themselves on the piazza. Among so many who had light hearts and heavy purses he imagined that he could secure one or two subscribers, so up the steps he marched. He showed his paper and described its merits. All listened, but nothing was said. He brought him money, so he went his way, disappointed and discouraged. It was a hot day, and our friend took a seat under a shady tree. As he did so he put his hand up to his tired head—for his head did ache. As he did so he saw approaching him a young gentleman whom he had met at the hotel, and who asked him, in a cheery voice, what luck he had met with. On learning his circumstances, the gentleman presented him with a greenback of no small amount, and told him that he hoped he would meet with better luck elsewhere. Our friend said he did not see why an entire stranger should take so much interest in him. The reply was that he wanted to see every one who earnestly tried to prosper. Fortune had been kinder to him than to some others and that he thought it no more than his duty to help another, if it were in his power to do so. To our friend the speech was like the sun breaking through the clouds of a dark day; his way seemed brighter and he felt light of foot and heart. I know what the gentleman's name is, and I wish I could give it here, but as I cannot, I say Heaven bless one who is so thoughtful and kindly-hearted and Heaven will bless him. It is a simple incident, I know, but if so simple an act can render one more willing to combat against rebuffs and slights, then I advocate strongly for simplicity, and urge one and all to do like simple acts.

A few dollars or a few kind words may help one, at times, exceedingly, but put them together and you'll soon perceive their worth. Don't be so chary of them when they will produce such good results. We are very apt to think that little deeds amount to naught, when, in reality, they make the sum of life. Trifles do make perfection, and the reason none of us arrive at the state of perfection is because we so entirely cease to look after the trifles.

Don't you suppose that the gentleman, who has given me a topic for an essay, felt far happier in his mind than the butterflies of fashion who waste a great deal of money on frivolous pleasures and think nothing of other's comforts? Don't you suppose the kindly young

heart is going to prosper and have an easy conscience through life? I do. I think he deserves all the success in the world because he is unselfish and does unto others as he would be done by himself.

Do good as you go along and don't wait until you die to dispose of your benefactions, because there might be some persons who would not be sorry to attend your funeral. Enjoy seeing the enjoyment of those you benefit, while you are in the flesh. By that means you will have the heartfelt wish of all, for a long life. These are the sort of people who please—those who bestow much of their means while they can see the good it is doing others, and not hoard it for relations and friends to squabble over after the body is cold in the coffin. This is the law and gospel of—

EVE LAWLESS.

HER HERO.

If you were to ask her to describe him, she would do so in two words—"Just sweet." That includes all the graces in the catalogue, to her mind. To be sure, her last new bonnet, and the dress which was brought home this week, her pet poodle, and the novel she is reading, are all "just sweet," but the modifications which the adjective undergoes in all its various applications are at a superlative climax when applied to him.

He has a profile like Apollo; he parts his hair in the middle and wears a waxed mustache and lavender pants; he looks poetry out of a pair of expressive eyes; his feet are encased in No. 5 boots; he is never seen out of doors without kid gloves on his hands and a switch-cane in them, with which he flips right and left indiscriminately, startling the restless horse drawn up by the curb one side of him, and poking the end into any lace flounces that sweep near him on the other, as he walks down the street. He sports an embroidered shirt-bosom and diamond pin, and is never without the latest novelty in a tie; he wears a nobby tile; is lavish of perfume and bear's roosebush in his buttonhole.

His morning begins about three o'clock in the afternoon, and he always has an abundance of time for the street corners.

If he wears an eye-glass, as he very often does, he has attained the art of twirling it scientifically into its place as he throws himself into critically observant attitude whenever a silk dress is drawn up an inch or so at the opposite verge of the crossing.

He doesn't talk a great deal, but he looks like an angel and says "By Gawg," and "aw-weally," and he "adoahs Byron, you know; verry cleavah and dused good fellah, you understand." He calls women "cweetures," and a face that he saw three months ago for the first, is an old story to him. If he has a mission on earth it is to submit with the air of a well-bred lady to being lionized and idolized by the marties. He is emphatically "a ladies' man," but he has learned that indifference conquers where ardent pursuit would fail, and he gains prestige by merely looking the adoration he only vaguely hints in words.

One might imagine that he is affected with some spinal complaint, from the fact that he seems quite unable to stand alone when any object is near against which he can lean. He detests energy, and he looks with a kind of pitying wonder upon the multitudes of his fellow-men who make life one great battle after fame or wealth or power—a battle he has no inclination to engage in. He will look at you with a very pathetic look in his expressive eyes, and tells you he thinks work must be "aw, a confounded boah, you know," and he will saunter out of a ball-room three or four hours after midnight scarcely flushed after waltzes, galops, les lancers and polka quadrilles without number. If there is rouge-et-noir after that until sunrise begins to gild the outside world; if he pauses on his homeward way to lean with uncommon frequency against the lamp-posts, and casts a sentimental gaze toward the sky, and proves himself true to democratic principles by embracing the policeman like a brother; if, as he is called into requisition before breakfast, he is mingled somewhat later, the result will only be that he becomes paler, more interested, more Byronic and more her hero than ever.

She is a romantic young thing, the reader must understand; if a spice of diabolism characterizes her hero, all the better; if it is hinted he goes at a rapid pace on the straight road to ruin, she forthwith throws a halo of romance about him; he is Monte Christo, Don Giovanni, her hero still, unless—alas!—she meets him on promenade with her rival upon his arm and the whisper of an engagement just aloft.

"A very wicked, immoral young man, they say," she repeats, as she tells the news. "He's run through with all his money and is dissipated—oh, dreadfully so, I understand—and there isn't a doubt but he is marrying her for her fortune. It is certainly wonderful how blind people can be!" J. D. B.

Foolscap Papers.

The Civil Rights Bill.

THE following bill lately passed both houses of Congress (in my coat pocket), and has become one of the institutions of the Constitution.

Civil Rights, as everybody knows, implies the right to be civil, and every one has now a right to act that way according to the ax of Congress on this measure.

Painters shall not be restricted from attending theaters on account of their color.

Horse-jockeys shall enjoy the privileges of this bill, and no questions asked in regard to their race.

This bill recognizes the red man, if he is sufficiently well read.

A man who has been a slave to his wife shall be recognized without regard to his former condition.

Writing civilly to an editor will be considered a civil write.

If you are kicked by mistake on the street you will have the right to kick back—unless the aggressor happens to be the undersigned.

A white man shall have the right to sleep in a hotel—this clause alludes to the noisome, miserable beds, hard pillows, and other insects.

A man shall not be prevented from entering a place of public amusement on account of having no money.

All men shall be allowed to vote for both candidates at elections. This shall be no one-sided affair.

Hereafter no wife will be allowed to send her husband away from the table and make him go to bed without his supper just because he happens to remark a word or two about the sorrowful nature of the bread. Such wrongs cry for justice of the peace in family circles.

Wives are expected to treat their husbands—in company at least—as if they were acquaintances.

Any young lady rejecting the suit of a gentleman and accepting another's, shall be held liable to damages for infringement of the law, which guarantees equal rights to all men.

Every man is expected to apologize for stepping upon a gentleman's corn—either to the gentleman or to the corn.

All men will be allowed a seat in the street-cars. If there happens to be no more there, he will be provided with one in the Legislature.

The rights of book agents should be respected. No man shall turn a book agent away unless he has held you long enough to tell you all the contents of the book, and it is altogether unnecessary for you to buy it.

Persons calling on you just before dinner will have the right to remain until after dinner.

Foreigners, expecting to come to this country, will have the right to vote by letter.

Any man threatened with a licking will have the inalienable right to ask to receive it by mail—postage paid.

Successful men in business will be obliged to recognize their poor relations.

Anybody visiting an editor's office shall have the right to sit in the editorial chair while the editor sits on a box.

Civil rights do not unlawfully interfere with marriage rites, but the husband must be allowed to eat at the first table, at least if company is present, and washing the dishes must not be always saddled on him.

White men shall be allowed to enter a colored barber-shop, if he behaves himself, and he shall not be shaved too close; and if the razor pulls he shall have the right to civilly object, and if he wants his hair dyed the barber shall not be allowed to make a black man of him, by getting the dye all over his face. He should be invited to call again, as an evidence of good faith, and he shall have the right to do so—if he sees fit.

Uninvited guests to an evening party shall have the right to stay away, and if they bring suit they must do so at their own expense.

No wife will be allowed to discharge her husband on account of his politics.

One man shall be no more than another in a public hotel. Every man has a right to register himself as a general; and all guests shall sit at the head of the table; and all shall occupy the best room, no matter how many there are.

If two men meet on the sidewalk it shall be the duty of each to stop till the other passes. This will be civil civility.

Any man applying for an office at Washington shall receive it, for no man in this country, now, is any more than another or anybody else, unless he considers himself two.

All men will be allowed to vote at the age of two years. WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Woman's World.

LET us, in this paper, forego our usual report of hats and dresses and lingerie that are "in style," and pause over the question of dress and style in that wider sense which allies them to means and morality.

In one of his late letters from Paris, the well-known critic and *littérateur*, Arsene Houssaye, repeats this little "joke": "The Countess d'Armailiac was about to start for the ball; one of her children, who had not yet gone to bed, came to say good-night, and see her in her fine dress. 'Oh, mamma! how pretty you are when you are undressed!' 'What do you mean—undressed?' The countess looked only her gloves and fan. 'Why, you see, mamma, you have so much dress below, and so little above.'"

We were given to understand, early in the year, that the *decollate* dress was going out, and that for the immediate future we were to have costumes that did not shock modesty and propriety, but it would appear that the women in Paris who give "the fashions" to us Americans cannot give up the reserved right of exhibiting their charms to the very verge of indecency and indecorum. So, we presume, we shall have a continued reign of the "full dress" that so shocked the uneducated sense of the countess's child.

As to the trade cost of these costumes, we were prepared for large figures, but not for the admission of extravagance which our well-dressed women now treat as a matter-of-course concomitant of such dress. Houssaye himself, accustomed to gay society, is amazed at what is the rule. Worth, the man-milliner, does not take a given number of yards of any material and with it produce a dress. No, he scorns such a restriction to genius. He orders three times the absolutely necessary amount of goods, and *experiments*. He cuts and fits and throws aside the rich material at will, and thinks 100 yards of goods none too much from which to produce his "invention," whose making up costs far more than the original price of the expensive cloth. What Worth does of course every other "fashionable dress-maker" is bound to do. Says Houssaye: "It is not only for the train that a great deal of material is required—it is for the 'retouching.' A dress does not make itself; the best cutter, even if she designs like Raphael, must allow herself, as the artists say, 'space for repentance.' She cuts boldly into the cloth, feeling that her genius has the right to sacrifice everything that does not succeed." Will we imitate this extravagance do you ask?

Certainly we will! Are American women to be denied what the Parisienne adopts? By no means; our "first" ladies now make a boast of buying one-third or one-half more material than the dress consumes in order to permit the cutter and fitter to experiment. In a short time the one-third or one-half will extend to the full Parisian proportions of doubling the quantity; and the dressmaker who will consent to the old style way of cutting a garment for just the number of yards involved in the dress won't be regarded as either fashionable or tasteful.

As it is, we now require almost or quite double the quantity that made a fine dress ten years ago. It is no more excuse to say it is demanded by the style than it will be next year—when treble the quantity will be consumed by the experimenter's shears—to say that sacrifice is necessary; for in both cases "the style" is a mere caprice and not a necessity.

There must be a limit to this submission of women to the demands of style. To stop where we are seems impossible, seeing how infatuated the sex is with the mania for a reception at court, in their unpaid bills at Worth's and other virtuoso's of the needle and scissors.

It becomes us women, it seems to us, to take a searching view of the situation, and to discuss among ourselves the question—"What are we to do about it?" GRACE LISTON.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MSS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS. as "copy"; third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, tearing off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its full or page number.—A rejection by us means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We accept "The Warden to His Bride," "In a Tight Place," "The Earthquake's Donation," "A First of May Romance," "My Violator," "A Fool Lost and Saved," "After Long Waiting," "Claudia Wickley's Victory," "When They Met Again," "Gates Down."

And decline "The World Seems Dreary Now," "God in the Storm," "My Youthful Days," "The Reign of Peace," "My Violator," "A Fool Lost and Saved," "After Long Waiting," "Claudia Wickley's Victory," "When They Met Again," "Gates Down."

We refuse to take from the mail a manuscript from Shamokin, Pa., 12 cts. postage underpaid.

L. C. G. Poem named has not reached us.

St. LOUISIANA. "Injun Dick" runs through 20 numbers—price 6 cts. each.

C. S. H. Tobacco is never wholly destitute of nicotine.

NATHAN D. See notice of Mayne Reid elsewhere. His last serial was published in this paper, viz.: "The Specter Barque."

ADMIRAL'S BOY. Admiral Semmes was admiral only by courtesy, as his flag never was recognized by the nations.

J. O. B. We don't know the number of copies of Tupper's "Proverbial Philosophy" that has been sold, nor does any one else, we surmise.

SENEX. It is true, we suppose, that opium-eating is largely on the increase in our country. Of 21 tons imported last year only one-seventh was used in medicinal preparations. The rest must have been either smoked or chewed. It comes chiefly from India.

R. N. G. Always repeat orders at length. Previous letters usually are not preserved. Make each letter or order complete in itself.

JULIUS H. We have had so many requests to reprint "The Phantom Princess" that we are compelled to hold the matter under no restraint on the part of the publisher.

JOHN RENO. Your case demands careful investigation by a good physician. If you will represent your poverty before advice the medical man will not refuse you his advice.

L. K. There are, we believe, recruiting offices in St. Louis and Chicago. Write to "Army Headquarters, Enlisting Rendezvous, St. Louis, Mo."

ARCHITECT. To be a good architect demands a knowledge of materials, construction and the art principles of the orders. Consult any architect of established reputation for advice.

HAZEL. Your composition has no special merit. It is like any schoolgirl composition. What education may do for you of course we cannot say. It will, however, be a good thing in itself, so get it if you can.

ANCHOR. India rubber shoes or boots when torn are patched by an India rubber cement, sold by dealers in rubber goods. The mode of using it is explained on the package. Many shoe-repairs use the cement on rubbers.

IRISH JAMES. Boucault is an Irishman born. It is his real name. His wife, Miss Agnes Robertson, is a fine actress who does not now appear on the stage. We know of no "text-book" on the Celtic language.

SAMPLE. Almost any of the popular perfumes are enjoyable.—To clean your wash and toilet in soap made of Castile soap.—The "Language of Flowers" is given in BEADLE'S DIME LOVER'S CASSETTE.

TEXAN JOHN. Mules do sometimes bear young. In the famous acclimatizing garden near Paris there is a mare mule which has had two foals sired by an Arabian stallion, and is now in foal by a jack. The two foals are living and are as handsome as the sire. We have also heard of a similar case in your own State. Ask some old rancher about it.

ALMA. The first paper ever published in California was the *Californian*; it was published in Monterey, in '46, by Messrs. Cotton & Sample, and in 1847 was removed to San Francisco, where the *Star* was started in the same year, to be united with the *Californian* in '48.

JOCKEY. To cure distemper in horses take a quart each of sassafras, cherry bark, and burdock roots, and put in a kettle with two gallons of water and boil down to one gallon. Give of this one gallon a day in bran and oats, and the cure will soon be effected.

S. L. A. The reverence for the three gold leaves of the shamrock as symbolical of the Divine Trinity did not originate with St. Patrick, but came from the Persians, many centuries ago, for the plant was consecrated by the sons of Iran centuries before it became a sacred symbol in Erin. Some philologists discover it in the Sanskrit, "Erin" and "Ireland" with the word Iran, and, in the respect for the shamrock, a Tartar origin of the Celtic race.

JOSEPH H. Electricity travels a quarter of a mile at the rate of 288,000 miles in a second, but as electricity has no velocity in the ordinary sense, its speed is proportioned to the square of its volume, and it might vary considerably in rate in passing the distance of 288,000 miles.

TRUCK DRIVER. To prevent your horses slipping, put a small piece of cast-steel, about half an inch long, in the center of the shoe, and make them square-ended, so as to give them a cold chisel temper.

MARTIN V. A minister is not entitled to perform the marriage service for himself, and one who thus unites himself to a young girl does it illegally. So it has been decided in England by the House of Lords, and our own courts accept the decision. In some States statute law provides against such an act.

SEAGRAM. What is meant by the "whale's compass" is a term applied by the whale fishermen to the spent whale, on account of the unerring exactness with which it purues its way to the surface across the ocean without the slightest deviation.

SOPHIE. You can fasten the handles that are loose on knives and forks, by making a powder of one pound colophony and eight ounces sulphur, obtained at the druggist's; stir together and put on the fire, and when cool grind into powder; mix one part of the powder with half a part of fine brick-dust, and fill the cavity of the handle with the stuff, after which heat the stem of the knife or fork, and insert.

ONTARIO asks: "Whence the name 'maskalonge,' and is it proper?" The fish you speak of is the most beautiful and the largest of thepike family. The Ojibwa name is "maskanongia," meaning "long snout." The French-Canadians named it by a curious coincidence of sound, and meaning "masque longue," or "long face." In legend, the mackerel of Canada, as to rights of fisheries, it is named "maskalonge," which is the proper sportsman's name. It differs very slightly from the mackerel or pike. The snout is a little longer, and the spots are black, whereas in the pike they are orange red.

BIVALVE. There are more than a hundred houses employed in canning oysters in the States about nine million bushels a year are canned and exported. Sixteen hundred vessels are engaged in the oyster trade in the Chesapeake alone. The California sardine canning trade already rivals that of the Mediterranean.

DISTANCE. The tendency in English racing is to short races, and fleet, weedy animals. Last year there were only two races of four miles each run in England, while of three-quarter mile dashes there were no less than one thousand and forty-four. 1872 races were run in England last year, of which only 92 races were over two miles each. In the United States were run 954 races, of which 126 were over two miles, 44 were of two-mile heats, 5 races of three-mile heats, and 4 races of four-mile heats.

MATCH CHUCK asks: "What is a Spanish mackerel? Is it the same as the Bonito or not?" No. There are five grand fishes of the mackerel tribe on our coast, all of which resemble each other, and three are frequently confounded together. These three are the Spanish mackerel, the Bonito (Bonita or Bonetta), and the Sierra (or cero or cerus). Their forms and sizes are similar—long, slender, elegant, fork-tailed, rapid, agile, voracious, but almost useless for food, very hard to catch. The Bonito is striped, the Cero spotted with black, the Spanish mackerel spotted with gold. The other great mackerel is the blue fish, well-known to all. The horse mackerels are the kings of the tribe, only taken by harpooners. They are plentiful around the mouth of the St. Lawrence, and thence south to Nantucket, having been killed

PRETTY MARGUERITE.

BY BARTLEY T. CAMPBELL.

An old, old port, where sea-gulls swing
In and out, from year to year;
And Tascan sailors sweetly sing,
And frail crafts fringe the ancient pier,
There dwelt a maiden fair and sweet;
They called her pretty Marguerite.

I met her where the wild waves leaped
Pale with haste to kiss the strand,
And sated with the joy thus reaped,
Turning, fled from the lustrous land.
Her hair was gold, and oh, her eyes
Were surely bits of summer skies.

I spoke to her, and she replied—
Chafed with the sea and drift,
Until the amber twilight died,
And night from the waves did lift
Its burning shield, and hung it where
The Milky Way led through the air.

Again, when morning flushing came,
Breathing balm and full of gloe,
And ocean's breast was all aflame,
We met by chance; she bowed to me;
Through yielding sand I traced her feet,
Feet of my pretty Marguerite.

Throughout the long, long summer time
Wooded I her, with every art,
Told her my love in tale and rhyme,
Till she seemed of me a part;
Then fled she to another swain,
What cared she for a strong man's pain.

Day in, day out, down by the shore
Sat I where the tide rolled in,
Tried to think of her nevermore,
But ah! the ocean's breast was all
Seemed but to murmur, low and sweet,
"Pretty, pretty Marguerite."

One hazy day, when the year was old,
Sailed I from the little port;
I thought I saw a gleam of gold
With the gentle breeze at sport,
Then for a moment I could trace
A girl's form at the trying place.

Drifted my bark for thirty years,
O'er ocean caves, mid coral reefs,
Sometimes its sails were wet with tears,
Dews from many silent griefs;
But sometimes I was gay and glad,
They live not who are ever sad.

Then I steered 'neath Italian skies,
Back to the fairest Tuscan;
With all the old love in my eyes,
Hunting a lost part of me,
I found a woman, old and gray,
All alone on the ancient quay.

She knew me, though my beard was long;
"Strange enough, I knew not her;
But when she sang a song I'd sung,
Memory began to stir—
"Come to me, Marguerite," I cried,
"Dream of my youth! my joy! my pride!"

"Oh, why this salt spray in thy hair?
Snow-white is this ocean's foam;
She looked up with a saddened stare,
"This spray is from the sea of Time,
Fresh youth has roamed far, far from me
Since you left dear old Tuscan."

"And with gay youth went many friends,
Friendship false and beauty vain,
And flattery dies where beauty ends,
Leaving but remorse and pain.
Then moaned I: "Why did he depart,
And why should woman have a heart?"

I kissed her, and we walked away
Hand in hand, as once we walked;
Parted we not close of day,
I think 'twas of the past we walked;
But this, I know, she said, "Amen"
To the old story told again.

Married for Money.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

THEY were both attractive-looking women; one, fair, slight, with serious gray eyes and intensely black lashes and brows and hair; with a sweet, thoughtful mouth, that indicated also an imperious gravity that well became all of Mrs. Leverett's actions.

A pretty name—Fay Leverett—Mrs. Fay Leverett, the young widow of twenty-seven, whose husband, upon dying, left her a fortune and a stepdaughter only seven years younger than herself—Miss Jessie, who was ardently attached to her dead father's pretty wife, and who was more like a dear sister than anything else.

Jessie was very fair to see, as well as Fay. Jessie was a pure, perfect blonde, with the goldenest of hair, the clearest of skins, the bluest of eyes. A witching, winsome girl, who set half the beaux demented, leaving the other half to admire the mature though equally irresistible charm of Mrs. Leverett's society and beauty.

Jessie was gay—as gay as a beautiful, happy, care-free girl ought to be; and while her life was a round of innocent gaieties and pleasures, Mrs. Leverett, in the retirement of home, from which she seldom went, and where she shone like a pure, steady, lustrous star, received, very quietly, the adulation of her friends.

So, as has been stated, they were both attractive women, with the lion's share of beauty on Jessie's side, where it belonged, and the most wealth on Mrs. Leverett's side—that had come to her partly from her husband, who had provided for Jessie beautifully, and partly from a recently deceased connection, in whose property she had legal rights.

Being familiarly conversant with the actual condition of affairs, Arch Estmond had been for a month or more balancing the momentous question in his mind—as to which of these fair women he should propose—Jessie, whose radiant, sparkling beauty had bewitched him, or Fay, whose fortune made her a very desirable object of admiration, aside from the sweetness he was not slow to perceive.

He was not what you might call a bad man, because he thus argued, pro and con. Many a man, better than he, has done likewise, and men of acknowledged nobility of character and faultlessness of principle will continue to do it, so long as there is money in the world and it remains the superlative attraction.

He was not a bad man; but he was selfish and wanted the best for himself, who does not? He would have married a woman for her money, and then been as good a husband to her as nine out of ten could have been. So, very gradually, he decided in favor of Mrs. Leverett, the while, away down in his heart, he could not banish the bright, saucy face of Jessie. He was a handsome man—self important, self-assured, proud and independent in manner and speech; and yet, genial, pleasing and a prime favorite, not only with society at large, but with Mrs. Leverett and Jessie, at whose house he had been a frequent visitor the past two years, and where he was sure of a welcome, and whither he bent his steps as he threw aside his cigar that had been his companion in the reverie, that decided him to win Fay Leverett for his wife.

The brown damask curtains that divided the bay-window from the parlor, were partly open, and just inside, with her head bent forward on her hand, Mrs. Leverett could see Jessie, sitting in a motionless attitude, that of itself betrayed the unusual thoughtfulness of the girl.

Mrs. Fay was making a fleecy air-castle, as she sat cozily in front of the grate, but her eyes went over to the half-parted curtains oftener than was good for the completion of her task, and her thoughts were constantly on the girl's drooping figure, with its flushed face, and serious countenance.

An hour passed, with only the low, murmurous tick of the Egyptian clock on the mantel, the dropping of a coal from the grate, or the nestling of the canary in the gilded cage, to indicate life, a warmth, a companionship. An hour, while Mrs. Leverett's fingers lagged with every moment and her interested anxiety increased.

No sign from the girl; no rustle of her dress; until after another long, silent half-hour, she abruptly arose, and emerged from the curtains, a half-anxious smile on her face, and the tokens of a puzzled decision in her eyes.

Mrs. Leverett looked up gladly, quickly. "Jessie, dear, can I be of any assistance? or—ought I not to know?"

Jessie came swiftly over to Mrs. Leverett's side, and sat down on the low soft ottoman on which the lady's feet had been resting.

"It is so strange that I cannot decide to accept Mr. Lorne's offer, mamma. I have scolded myself, and coaxed myself, and yet, there seems something that will not let me say yes. It is very strange, mamma."

Mrs. Leverett stroked the glistening, golden hair tenderly.

"I wish you could have decided Jessie, for there never can come another such opportunity for happiness to you again. You know what a nobleman Mr. Lorne is, don't you?"

An eager, acquiescing look came to her eyes.

"Indeed I know it, mamma, and that is what makes me so vexed and puzzled with myself. I admire him so much, and think so much of him. I know he is good, high principled, of spotless reputation—in every way far worthier of a princess than me. And yet, mamma, I don't dare say yes, because—"

She hesitated, and a wistful, anxious, puzzled look clouded the brightness of her eyes.

"Because what, Jessie? Do you shrink as a woman should from giving her hand where she cannot bestow her heart? Or—look at me, Jessie—and her truthful, earnest eyes looked into the girl's—"or do you think of some one else?"

A faint tinge of deeper color surged to Jessie's cheeks, and she involuntarily averted her face.

"I—I—don't know. I am not sure that I care for any one, but mamma—mamma! I do think about Mr. Estmond so much!"

Her brave, girlish confession was very sweet, very artless, and Mrs. Leverett smiled, half-amusedly, half-sadly.

"Arch Estmond? Child, he is more than twice as old as you are! Arch Estmond!"

Her voice faltered just a trifle, but Jessie did not detect it, or, having noticed the defection, never dreamed of the cause—dreamed that her pretty, sedate mother also thought much of handsome Arch Estmond.

But, whatever the feeling that Fay had cherished away down in her heart, she gave no sign beyond that one slight shiver in her sweet voice.

"If you love Mr. Estmond, dear—"

Jessie's clear eyes met hers on the instant.

"Oh, mamma, I didn't say that; indeed, I don't mean anything except that I dare not accept Mr. Lorne—dear old Phil—while I even think of any one else."

Fay's eyes moistened at the girl's keen sense of honorable right.

"There is time—give yourself plenty of time for a thoughtful examination of your own heart. If you think you love Mr. Estmond—my blessing go with you. If you accept Philip Lorne, you are sure of my cordial consent."

And so these two noble women acted in Jessie's love affair, while Arch Estmond, who had fascinated them both, was fighting down the ever-constant image of a fair, sweet face framed in with fluff golden hair, and lighted with dazzling blue eyes; while he was waiting patiently for his appointed time, to ask Mrs. Leverett to be his wife.

A rush of cool, fresh air came in through the open door, followed by Mr. Lorne and Jessie Leverett, ruddy, shiny-eyed, with hair wind-blown over their faces, and the sweet, pure smell of frostiness in their clothes.

Mrs. Leverett looked up from her book, a faint surprise on her face that only Jessie understood.

"Mamma—I have insisted on Phil's coming for your congratulations; we're engaged, mamma, after all! and I'm so happy!"

Lorne laughed and extended his hand to Fay.

"If I did not understand what Jessie means by that 'after all,' I might be inclined to think I had run a great risk. However, I am perfectly happy. And we have your consent?"

Fay kissed him tenderly.

"My warmest benediction! while among the best wishes I offer is, that there may be always the frankness between you and Jessie that there seems to have already been: I infer you know why she delayed her answer!"

Was she making fun, or only in one of her earnest, literal moods? He could not think the former; there was, beside, a something peculiarly earnest in her eyes and face and voice and manner.

"If you are satisfied, I will try to give you the reward you ask, and are so anxious to obtain—if it really is worth having."

She laughed softly—she was more bewitching than ever.

"You doubt that this dear heart and hand of yours is a reward fit for a king? You have only to command me to prove my devotion to the prize I have won."

He was thinking what a strange wooing this was—how different from what wooings generally were; but then—he was not a boy; and Fay was a widow nearer thirty than anything else. And beside—eighty thousand dollars in prospective perfectly reconciled him to anything—even to the odd proof she put him to.

"I may be too exacting, Arch, but you know there are so many people who would be glad of any opportunity to say ill-natured things about you marrying me for my money; and as I know how very untrue that is, you would not lower yourself so, would you? I want you to prove before the whole world that it is really me you love, and that even a year's absence from me cannot cool the ardor of your love."

She laid her hand caressingly on his coat-sleeve. He looked a little surprised, then disappointed, then pained; but—agreed, of course.

"If you are so cruel as to banish me for a year—why, I must go. And when I come back, Fay, my dear?"

She averted her eyes, and her cheeks flushed.

"A year from to-night I will meet you at the altar of St. Hilda's—there to give you the just deserts for your long, patient probation."

He kissed her good-by—rather coolly; but the one blessed thought sustained him, and in many other hours of that long, weary year, brightened by occasional letters from Mrs. Leverett, that in no other way could a fortune and a lifetime of ease be so rapidly acquired.

Over England, France, Germany; traveling here and there, he went the rounds, waiting for the day to come, while in her home, pursuing her customary avocations, Fay went on, and kept her own counsel; only, there were times when there came a stern, fitful light in her eyes, and a pain on her face, for a second.

Jessie Leverett stood before her dressing-bureau, attired in her bridal array, and looking every inch a princess in her dignity, her proud grace. Beside her, Mrs. Leverett was buttoning her pearl-gray kid—almost as young, as fair, as regal, in her wedding-dress of gray silk and Valenciennes lace, as the bride herself.

"You will have plenty of time to see Philip in the library before you start for church, dear," she was saying, gently. "It is now only six o'clock, and I gave orders that St. Hilda's should not be open until eight, at earliest. So while you and Phil are talking over, I will take the close carriage with Dr. Torry, and aunt Nell, and just drive over to the church, to see if everything is in readiness."

Jessie was too interested in her own affairs to note the unusual gleam in her stepmother's eyes; nor did she observe, as she stepped in the carriage, the increasing flush on her cheeks.

It was a short ride—ten minutes—and they drew up beside another carriage, whose driver was waiting to and fro.

Fay's observant eyes gleamed as she saw the suggestive coach, but she said nothing when the rector, who had escorted them from her special request, assisted her from her carriage, and led her into the church, yet desolate of guests for Jessie's wedding.

And yet not empty—for Arch Estmond, with a face full of triumph, met her in the aisle.

"Fay—at last! my own, at last! and it is worth all I have endured to get to a gentleman with him—this is 'Fay'—her name is enough. Mrs. Leverett, Mr. Oswald Gray, my friend and fellow-traveler."

Dr. Torry and aunt Nell looked on in mute astonishment, but Fay gracefully arranged matters by an informal introduction and explanation that Mr. Estmond had met her there; at her request, to marry her.

Although astounded, Dr. Torry had no alternative left; and the party took their places at the altar, and the solemn ceremony began.

Of Arch Estmond the question was asked and promptly answered; and then the clergyman turned to Fay, standing so quiet, so graceful.

"Will thou take this man to be thy wedded husband?"

There was a silence like death; a silence that was embarrassing in the extreme, and yet Fay made no answer. The question came again, and then she looked full in Estmond's face.

"I will not."

Only those three terrible words; but they made Estmond turn white as death.

"What do you mean—are you mad?" She smiled scornfully.

"Not so mad as you must be to think I did not bring you here to punish you for your impudence in bandying my name from place to place, from ear to ear, as the 'widow you swore you'd marry to pay your debts.' I have paid my debt to you—that is all."

She came away as she went, cool, calm; and beyond Dr. Torry and aunt Nell the story never went by their three, at least.

What Estmond said, or did, or thought, mattered not; he was punished for his boasting—perhaps more hardly than he deserved, but certainly very effectually.

The Terrible Truth:

OR,

THE THORNHURST MYSTERY.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

AUTHOR OF "STRANGELY WED," "THE FALSE WIDOW," "ADRIA, THE ADOPTED," "CORAL AND RUBY," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XV.

WHO PAID THE DEBTS.

THESE five days had been days of intolerable agony to Vane Vivian. He had remained close to his own apartments, denying himself even to Dare, waiting the result he felt must come soon: the action of his creditors. Waiting in sullen desperation rather than attempt to fly from them, as any other man might have done.

It was very nearly midnight, and he was still sitting before his fire, moody, despairing, when a knock sounded at his door, and a servant appeared at his answer.

"A gentleman to see you, sir, if you have not retired. Very important, or I wouldn't have disturbed you, sir."

"Haven't I said that I would see no one? Tell the person so."

"You will see me, Vivian." The gentleman had followed close in the servant's wake, and stepped forward to speak for himself. "It is late; but you will pardon that in the anxiety which would not let me wait."

"Sir Rupert! I do not need to say how welcome you are. I thought it was one of those cursed meddlers who are always ready to intrude and gloat over a man's misery when he's in the last ditch. This is kind of you. Of course you know?"

"Yes, I know, Vane. I heard the story of your misfortunes scarcely an hour ago."

"Misfortunes! You are very lenient. The results of my recklessness deserve a far harsher name. At twenty-three I am a ruined and hopeless man through my own folly. A cheerful prospect before me knowing that, is it not? I wonder what the end to such a career is apt to be?"

"My dear fellow, you are discouraged now. Be sure there is some way out of your difficulties. It is to help you find it that I have come here to-night. Will you tell me just how you stand, keeping nothing back?"

"For what good, Sir Rupert? Whether it is a thousand or a hundred thousand, it is all the same to me. I haven't the hope of raising a penny. Do you know, I might be turned out of my lodgings here but that I chanced to pay the quarter in advance?"

"Not so bad but it might be worse, I dare say. Let me tell you what I have heard, and you can signify how much of it is true. In the first case, is it a fact that you have been raising money on a post-office?"

Vane buried his face in his hands with a groan.

"My dear fellow, I am not here to blame you," said Sir Rupert, gently. "Don't you suppose I understand that you were driven to it?"

Vane lifted his haggard face and looked forward into the coals, a quiver which he could not suppress for a moment about his lips.

"I don't deserve such friendship as yours. It's all true. I was involved, and getting deeper every day, and those night-brokers were the first to propose it to me. I was the heir to Thornhurst; why not clear myself of embarrassments through my future prospects? They knew their business, and put it that way. Let them advance me fifty thousand now, and the return should be eighty thousand when I came into my inheritance, with so much per centage to increase with the ratio of years. I have shuddered with horror since, to think how I set up money by the side of my father's life, but I did not think of it so then. I paid my debts with that money, and squandered the little which was left along with my regular allowance, and became involved for twenty thousand more, in the vain hope that luck might turn. I knew what I might expect when my father declared he would disinherit me. I have signed myself in a Shylock bond, and I look for no mercy. I don't know what the worst may be, but that is what I have to expect. My only wonder is, they have delayed this long. If it was to torture me, they could not have chosen a better method than by keeping me in this suspense."

"Not so bad as it might be, as I told you, Vane. The brokers will be glad to get out of their bond, since they understand that you have lost your chance of Thornhurst. There is nothing there to dishearten you, my dear boy—certainly nothing criminal."

"Nothing! I have just told you, Sir Rupert, that I am in debt seventy thousand dollars, and I doubt if I could raise seventy thousand cents to save my own neck."

"I quite understand you; but it is not out of the question that some compromise may be made. It must be that your creditors are waiting for, and I would be ashamed to be ranked as your friend, Vane, if I were not ready now to act a friend's part."

He spoke hurriedly, a little constrainedly. The other looked at him, then put forward a hand to grasp him in a tight pressure.

"Heaven bless you, Sir Rupert Archer. But that must not be. No, I will not hear another word. I have brought myself to grief, but my best friend shall not suffer through me."

Sir Rupert saw how useless it would be to urge him.

"You will not refuse to let me investigate for you, then, Vivian? To see what kind of compromise may be effected, and what hindrance is apt to be put in your way if you are obliged to go away from here? Have you thought of going away?"

"I suppose there will be nothing else left," Vane said, wearily. "I did not even count on that alternative. I had made up my mind to take the consequence of my own acts, without even an attempt to evade it."

"You have been reckless even in your desperation. Have you tried to effect a reconciliation with your father?"

"It would be worse than useless. He has the best of reasons for holding bitter anger—he will never forgive me while he lives. It is my just retribution, that and all else which may come to me. I have not a friend left I can count upon unless it is you, Sir Rupert. And Dare—I should not forget Dare—he has been faithful as a brother."

Sir Rupert had his own doubts of Dare, but such vague and apparently unfounded doubts he would not hint them.

"You have one more very warm friend—one whose friendship any man might be proud to claim. I speak of Miss Carteret. It was she who told me the news first, and urged me to come to you without delay."

"Yes," said Vane, bitterly; "she may well urge it now, that her own aim is secure of accomplishment. Did you know the colonel declared in favor of her against my own chance of inheritance? You know the full measure of my wickedness now, but perhaps you do not know what brought the first decided outbreak between my father and myself. She crept into my place in his heart until he proposed to marry her to me as my only chance of succeeding to Thornhurst, and, when I refused, she declared that she should inherit instead. After that came the exposure of my own baseness. I shudder at the thought of the unflinching monster my father must consider me."

"You do Miss Carteret wrong, Vane. She has tried to reconcile you father to you, and my own realization of the depth of his anger comes through the knowledge that she failed. If you had seen her as I did this very night, with tears in her eyes as she spoke of your despair, you would not doubt her sincerity. Miss Carteret is honest in her likes and dislikes; you are one of the fortunate few for whom she professes friendship, and she loses no opportunity to speak in your favor."

"I hope I may have done her injustice. I was bitterly disappointed in her, Sir Rupert. But no more of this. Dare tells me—I have seen him but once—that the festivities will begin at Thornhurst a little sooner because of

my disgrace. The family go down by the middle of the month, a week from this, and such guests as may not be able to tear themselves away from the gaieties here follow after the twentieth. I hope you will not forget your engagement there; Mrs. Grahame would be inconsolable."

"We will consider that again, but it is very possible Thornhurst may not now see me among the number. If I am to serve you, Vane, you must tell me where I can find these creditors of yours."

"I will go with you when you like. I am not afraid to face them; that will be enough better than this state of prolonged suspense."

"No, my dear boy! A matter like this is better settled through a third person. Convince them that no possible good can come through molesting you—that their only hope of obtaining anything is in giving you a chance, and letting you off quietly. I can give you letters to influential men in London, if you wish to try it there, but of that we will also speak again. I will not detain you longer than to give me the address. I am not very fresh myself after my journey of this afternoon."

He took down the directions Vane gave him carefully, and when he left, a few minutes later, there was more hope in the other's heart than had been there for days. His sleep that night was visited by pleasant dreams—dreams of a future which would redeem the past, and the angel who guarded the bright opening path would be the face of Nora.

Sir Rupert Archer lost no time in pursuing his investigations. The result was one furthered from his anticipations. He was back at his friend's lodgings by noon of the following day. Vane met him with all the dread he had nearly dismissed rushing upon him.

"What delusion is this you are laboring under, my dear fellow," cried Sir Rupert gayly, giving him such a grip as one would scarcely expect from his soft white hand. "You owe no man anything. I have been to see your Shylock and he declares his bond paid to the uttermost."

Vane started back.

"Archer! you have not—"

"I have not indeed, Vivian. Look into my eyes and be assured that, like your famous countryman, I cannot tell a lie. It is true, and I am almost as joyfully excited as you possibly can be."

"I can scarcely believe it is not a mistake. Who that would, could pay my debts to such an amount?"

"There is the mystery, Vane. The broker declined to tell me. He declared that he had been satisfied in full and had given up the bond; that his friend, whom I did not see—some disturbance has sent him out of the city from what I learned—the one who had a claim for twenty thousand and also been fully paid. All the information that he would give was that the party concerned had communicated with him through an agent, and had desired to remain incognito. Do you see no hope in this, Vane?"

A glow came into Vane's face, an eager light into his eyes.

"It must have been my father—it could have been no one else. It is more than I deserved, more than I ever hoped for."

His voice broke and his eyes suffused. He turned away abruptly to hide his emotion.

"I am going to call at the house after I return to my rooms and make a more suitable appearance. Shall I take some message from you, or—will you go yourself and seek the reconciliation which may not be impossible now. I think with you, no one but your father could have done this."

"Neither, my friend. My father has relented in this to save our name, and to spare me; but he may be bitterly angered still. I will wait some token from him before I intrude myself upon his notice, even by a word."

Nora heard the news from the baronet's lips, some two hours later.

"It is very strange," she said, thoughtfully. "I am positive it could not have been the colonel. He has not displayed one sign of relenting toward Vane."

"It must be, then, that his pride has induced him to spare his son the consequences of these debts."

"Possibly, but I cannot think so." And, though Nora said nothing more, she decided in her own mind that the baronet himself was responsible for the generous act.

The next week went swiftly by. The colonel and Nora with Mrs. Grahame and their guests departed for Thornhurst. A few lingering later followed about the twentieth, and of the whole invited number Sir Rupert Archer was the very last to leave the city.

Meantime Vane was making preparations to quit the country. He had fallen in with his friend's suggestion and determined to proceed first to London. His preparations were all but complete now, but he was lingering with no definite time for his departure set.

"I feel that if I go without my father's blessing, I will never have it," he said to Sir Rupert. "I shall take my passage for the third and wait until the last moment for some token. Go on to Thornhurst, my friend, and, if you can, send me a little hope from there. At any rate I shall see you again before I leave."

So Sir Rupert walked across from the station and into Thornhurst mansion, the despair of celebrity, on Christmas eve.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE COVERT INVITATION.

AT no time for twenty years had Thornhurst been so gay. Mrs. Grahame had *carte blanche* in ruling the entertainment, and Mrs. Grahame had apparently determined that no home-party in Christendom should excel this one in brilliancy, and in crowding one amusement after another like kaleidoscopic changes. Her whole life was bound up in surface pleasure. She had breathed the atmosphere of gaiety in her New York home, but for all that there was a skeleton in the closet there, whose dry bones rattled very often in her ears with disagreeable import. Lack of ready money was the great want of her life. Without it she had held her own with the world, she was a leader in society, but she was obliged to force recognition now where she would have overpowered with

none of the care to imber the draught beneath. So she went to work with a will to make Thornhurst the center of attractions scarcely less than those they had lately left.

"I have only one obstacle yet to overcome, but I almost despair of that," she said to Nora on the day preceding that which should usher in Christmas eve. "I want a Cleopatra for the *tableau vivant*; I have set my heart on that being the most gorgeous scene of all. And not one of all the people here can represent Egypt's dusky queen. You will be admirable as Titania, Nora, a trifle tall, but the ladies here are all tall as it chances, and all blondes. It was the greatest oversight that I didn't secure one decided brunette. I have been looking for one among the families of the neighborhood, but the darkest among all the ladies who have called is blue-eyed and brown haired, a far from my Cleopatra as day is from night."

"Then you haven't had a sight of Miss Montrose. The very ideal of a Cleopatra, Mrs. Grahame, positively the most beautiful woman I ever saw in my life. It is very unfortunate that the colonel's prejudices are so strong. He has a bitter dislike of her father, and I am afraid that even for you Miss Montrose will not be admitted to Thornhurst. He refused me, and I am hardly over the disappointment yet. I absolutely fell in love with her at first sight, and notwithstanding all the delightfully trying experiences I have been through, since that first impression lingers still."

"Fell in love, Nora! What a strong expression applied to an ordinary person like that Miss Montrose. I am sure we all have reason for thankfulness that your guardian is so decided. A very common young woman, Mrs. Grahame, I assure you, something of an Amazon in appearance, I grant, but not at all the sort of person you would care to introduce to such society as you have gathered here. I am positive my nerves would not bear the strain of her presence."

Mrs. Sholto Hayes who was present roused herself from her habitual languor to express herself thus forcibly.

"She's the picture of a Southern beauty, Mrs. Grahame, and as much a lady as I am," asserted Nora, in laughing defiance. "Mrs. Hayes saw things through the reverse of the glass that day; one of those days when everything goes wrong, and I was the unfortunate cause in her case. Mrs. Hayes suffered through her discomfort at being precipitated in the lane and afterward taking refuge in a house where she hadn't gone through with the formality previously of leaving her card."

The exertion of resistance from Mrs. Hayes was out of the question. She sunk back among the cushions of a couch where she had reclined all the morning.

"You queer creature!" she said, in mild protest. "One never knows how to take you."

"Montrose," repeated Mrs. Grahame, "and Southerners, did you say, Nora? It must be the family of whom Mr. Talbot told from the village was speaking yesterday. He said a portion of the lands that were confiscated during the war had been restored to Mr. Montrose. I remember he remarked that had remained very secluded here, and my own impression was rather favorable than otherwise. I don't see that this Miss Montrose should be less eligible as a guest than any other young lady of the neighborhood. We positively must have her if she will answer for a Cleopatra."

"You forget the one difficulty, my guardian's objection. He is scarcely more likely to consent now than before."

"Uncle Seymour has given the invitations entirely in my charge. I shall invite Miss Montrose in my own name. You may mention it to the colonel if you like, but in any case the young lady must be secured. But I really don't see how with all the costumes to be inspected, I am to take time to call upon her this morning. Do you suppose you could manage it, Nora? You would answer quite as well."

"I shall be too happy to my guardian's consent. But for once I decline to 'beard the lion in his den, the Vivian in his halls.' You must take that responsibility, Mrs. Grahame."

"Here he comes for the very purpose of cutting the knot of our difficulties," and Mrs. Grahame glanced up sweetly. "I have just discovered a person to take the important character of the evening, uncle Seymour—the Cleopatra, you know, which I almost despaired of representing. You will have no objection to sending an invitation even at this late day, I hope?"

"I leave everything of that kind with you, Lisa. Have your list complete by all means." Colonel Vivian had entered with something of a feverish earnestness into these festive preparations. He was striving to bury his own deep disappointment in the excitement of the time.

"Thanks, my dear uncle. Of course I did not really suppose you would object, but Nora here appeared to have some misgivings."

"The lady is Miss Montrose," spoke up Nora. "You know, Colonel Vivian, whether I had cause for misgiving or not. I for one would dearly like to have her here."

"I understand that the circumstances of the family heretofore have not been quite unexceptionable," put in Mrs. Grahame silkily. "That objection is alleviated by the restoration of Southern property very recently effected. The father and daughter intend to depart for the South early in the new year, Mr. Talbot mentioned."

Over the colonel's face swept a shade, his shaggy, white brows lowered, and Nora watched in fear that Miss Montrose's chances were few for appearing at Thornhurst. It was a moment before he spoke, and during that moment there had been a struggle in the colonel's mind.

His hatred of Walter Montrose had been based on his discovery that the other aspired to an alliance between his own daughter and the colonel's son. Walter Montrose had come to him, six years before, and made the proposal openly, insolently the colonel had considered it, urging his own birth and breeding, his daughter's beauty and culture, the far-off possibility of an honorable title and emoluments descending to him. Colonel Vivian rejected the proposition with scorn. No impostor, runaway slave owner of the South, secessionist at heart, should become allied in the remotest degree with the loyal, hot-headed Vivians. There might be other men as well-bred and as well-born too, he would dare say, other young ladies quite as beautiful and cultured, and for his own part he would rather see Vane married to some pretty, graceful girl of his own position, and no pedigree than any offshoot of Old England nobility. Of the far-away title and expectations he was suspicious, not to say openly incredulous. Things were vastly altered since that, however. There was no heir of Thornhurst now to be angled for. His own dislike for the man Montrose need not be brought into play, since they were to leave the neighborhood at so near a date. Yes, the girl might come if she chose and the others really wished.

He said so, not any too graciously, it is to be feared, and stalked away on his dignity to an uncompromising degree, but under that

stiff demeanor was the barrowing conviction always present of the bitter wound his own pride and independence had received.

Never, never again would Colonel Vivian be the same free-hearted, passionate, yet noble old man he had been before.

"Are you aware how close it is upon Christmas-time, Venetia?"

"The twenty-third, papa. I had occasion to consult the calendar this morning."

"After the style of Robinson Crusoe with his notched stick, that is all you have to mark the days. Are you any nearer an invitation to Thornhurst than you were two weeks ago, when the party first returned?"

"Certainly not. I was not aware that you still aspired to that honor for me."

"I have never retracted my first expression of the wish. Why should you think it?"

Miss Montrose lifted her face from the work with which she was engaged to look steadily at her father.

"I was aware of your plans in the past, the only plans which could interest you in my gaining entrance to Thornhurst. You know I never approved of them, even when I yielded in a measure to your wishes. Now that Colonel Vivian has disinherited his son, what possible object can you have in still desiring me to make friends with one who has certainly shown himself no friend of yours?"

"I gave you credit for some degree of discretion, Venetia. The colonel may disinherit his son a half-dozen times and come out the more deeply attached to him in the end. These floating rumors may be true or false, and no better place for discovering which than at the mansion. In any event, an opening for you there at the present time will be equivalent to an opening into the world when you are ready for it. Make friends of the people there, and you will have friends when we come North for next summer's campaign. You know what these people who have been gossiping about our recent good fortune do not, that no great boon has been bestowed in granting back those worn-out plantation grounds and racked buildings. The little that we made the place attractive once is gone now. We go there simply because there is nothing to be gained just now by staying here, and because a winter at the South will have its weight with those who have known us so meagerly circumstanced here. They will hardly suppose it a mere enticing prospect luring us away. Next season, as I said, we will come North again, and whether or not Thornhurst is yet an aim, and Vane Vivian the man I would choose for you, I shall expect you to do credit to your training."

She had not removed her eyes from his face all the while he had been speaking. Dark, passionate eyes they were, for all her features were disciplined to almost equal composure with his own. Her fingers had locked together in her lap with a pressure which left the blood settled in purple blotches under the almond-shaped nails.

"You have been training me all my life to barter my womanhood for the basest and paltriest considerations earth holds. You are urging me now to make a display of whatever good looks nature has bestowed upon me for no other purpose than the sake of such profit as you hope to make through me. You would show me as you would a horse or any other piece of property; you would make the best of my fine points and sell me to the highest bidder. Oh, papa, can nothing tempt you to more mercy than that? Do I deserve nothing better from you?"

"You have taken up strange views of these matters, Venetia—views that, with your education, I am disappointed at finding you entertain. You speak scornfully of the basest and paltriest considerations, as though all your life you had not been ground down for lack of them. You are modest on the subject of what you are pleased to term your good looks as well. In that one way you have been dowered munificently. If favor of station went in accordance with natural charms, you would surely be a queen. I have certainly counted upon making that beauty of yours a capital, Venetia. I have spared neither expense nor pains, as you know. I stood at no sacrifice in securing you the best instruction, in fitting you to appear equal with the best. In return I expect what I have striven to faithfully give—duty. Sacrifice to secure your own best interests and mine, if you consider it sacrifice; certainly no faltering on your part from this time out. Let me request that you do not make it necessary for me to repeat this homily again. I detest long speeches, and you have a full understanding of my expectations on this point."

Those cold, thin features and steely eyes were never harder than then, and in Venetia's mind again rose the question which had haunted her for weeks past—did he know that she was already a wife? She had thought so on that October night which seemed ages ago; she had gone to the tryst for a few brief moments on the following night; she had told Dare of her fears and begged him to come no more. It was like crushing all hope for herself, but she dared not risk that merciless displeasure to be wreaked upon Owen Dare. He had obeyed her so implicitly that, from that night, she had not once seen nor heard from him. He was at Thornhurst with the Christmas party, she knew, but so far as she was concerned, Thornhurst might have been at the antipodes, for her own knowledge of what was transpiring there.

She turned her head and looked through the window away across snowy stretches of field and lane, through leafless trees and bare shrubbery, where the walls of Thornhurst mansion rose stately and burnished to a red gleam in the winter sunlight. A noble pile, and one that Walter Montrose might almost be excused for coveting.

"Next to having the station which may come to me yet, my pride would be in seeing you mistress of a place like that," he said, observing where her glance wandered. "I don't suppose you are really to blame for failing to find a place there among the guests. I am only disappointed that your woman's ingenuity should not contrive some avenue of approach."

"Something more than mere ingenuity was required," she answered, listlessly. "I might have forced my way into the house, I dare say; I might even have staid there as lady's-maid, or seamstress, or something of that kind, now that I presume they are engaged with the costumes and preparations for the next few weeks, but I am not likely to be benefited by the change. We are as far from them to all practical purposes as the earth is from the stars."

"By no means, Venetia. If the case were hopeless—ah!" as his eyes were arrested by a shadow crossing the path without, a shape coming in through the rustic gate in front. "Who knows but your chance is really at hand, Lisa, my dear? That is surely Colonel Vivian's ward."

Colonel Vivian's ward, as admitted two minutes later, bright and fresh from her brisk walk through the keen wintry air. She took

the seat which was offered her, dropped her fur-lined wrap back from her shoulders, and chatted on the indifferent subjects which are always brought in on such occasions.

"I am delighted that an opportunity has occurred for renewing our acquaintance, Miss Montrose," said Nora, "even at the risk of having you think I might have found the opportunity sooner. My call of to-day should properly have devolved upon our mistress of ceremonies, but I usurped the favor instead. I am authorized to convey Mrs. Grahame's compliments and all that, but I am going to beg for my own sake that you will not refuse what I have come to ask. It is that you will come up to Thornhurst, be my particular guest for the next week."

Thus the invitation had come at last. Mr. Montrose, apparently absorbed in his book on the further side of the room from the first moment after Nora's entrance, shot a quick glance toward his daughter.

"I had not expected such an honor," said Miss Montrose, calmly.

"I do hope you will consent, although—" and Nora laughed—"I have not spoken of the weighty consequences to ensue. We are all engaged for acting charades, tableaux and the like, and at a glowing description from me, Mrs. Grahame has set her heart on securing you to take a part in them. She wants a Cleopatra, and of all the people far and near you are the only one who could consistently take the part."

"To which fact I am indebted for my invitation. Many thanks, Miss Carteret."

"Now you are not going to refuse?" cried Nora, in alarm. "Indeed, I have wanted you sincerely from the time we first came down."

"I am too sensible of the honor to think of refusing. I shall be happy to prove of any service, Miss Carteret, and accept most gladly."

Nora took her departure soon after, promising to send a carriage for Miss Montrose, and such effects as she should need for a week's sojourn later in the day. Venetia watched her from the window, taking a path across the fields on her return. What she had longed for she had in this invitation to Thornhurst. She would have the opportunity of meeting Owen Dare without fear, and beyond that she would not let her thoughts stray. She would meet Owen Dare, but for her life she could not have defined the thrill at her heart as most glad or painful.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 262.)

Overland Kit:

OR,
THE IDYL OF WHITE PINE.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,

AUTHOR OF "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," "WOLF DEMON," "WHITE WITCH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

BERNICE AND INJUN DICK.

BERNICE'S face flushed crimson as she caught sight of the like, sinewy figure of Injun Dick. She stopped suddenly, as though stricken into stone, and a long breath came from between the full, red lips.

Dick was advancing slowly; his hands clasped behind him, his eyes bent upon the ground, and his whole aspect plainly betraying that he was deep in thought.

He did not see the motionless figure that stood by the side of the rude road.

Slowly he came onward.

Bernice remained on the spot where she had stood when she had first discovered Dick approaching.

As he drew nearer and nearer, the color came and went in her wax-like cheeks. Supremely beautiful she looked, as she stood in the center of the little ravine through which ran the road, robed in her neat traveling suit, her golden-brown locks straying carelessly from under the jaunty straw hat.

Dick came on with measured pace, his brow dark with thought—furrowed with the lines of care.

Bernice made a slight motion toward him.

His quick ear caught the rustle of her dress. In astonishment he raised his eyes. When they fell upon Bernice's face, he halted and then recoiled, as though a phantom stood before him, rather than a young and beautiful woman. His face became ashy pale; huge drops of perspiration came out and trickled down his forehead. Injun Dick, the daredevil, who had never turned his back on mortal foe, now trembled at the mere sight of the fair young girl.

A moment he gazed upon Bernice with staring eyes; then he cast a rapid glance behind him, as if he meditated seeking safety in flight.

Bernice guessed his intention and promptly stepped forward.

"Isn't this Mr. Talbot?" she asked, fixing her large, clear eyes upon his face.

Dick's breath came thick and fast. What terrible spell had the face of the young girl cast upon him.

"Yes," he murmured, speaking only with a great effort.

"You are the gentleman who so kindly resigned the room to me last night, I believe?"

Bernice was now so near Talbot that she could have touched him with her hand.

By a powerful effort, Dick recovered his composure.

"Nothing but a common act of courtesy, Miss," he replied, quietly; "any one would have done the same."

"But, as you performed the act of courtesy you deserve the thanks," she said, a pleasant smile upon her fair face; and, as Talbot gazed upon it, he could not help thinking how lovely she was.

"I am always pleased to be of any service to a lady," he answered.

"Mr. Talbot," she said, suddenly, after a little pause, during which her eyes had rested searchingly upon the face of Injun Dick, "as no one has ever introduced me to you, I suppose I must do so myself. My name is Bernice Gwyne, and I come from New York."

Talbot bowed, but replied not; his face, though, was a shade paler under the searching eyes of the girl.

"Do you know why I have come to this wild mining region?" she asked, her full blue eyes still resting upon his face.

"Why, how should I know, Miss?" he asked, an expression of astonishment on his features.

"Then I'll tell you; I am a woman who seeks. Can you guess what I seek?"

Talbot shook his head in the negative. For a moment Bernice looked disappointed, but it was soon over.

"I seek my cousin, Patrick Gwyne, who left New York ten years ago."

Talbot looked steadily in the face of the girl, but did not speak. Bernice's brows contracted just a little.

"I have been wishing to see you all the

morning, Mr. Talbot," she continued, after a moment's pause; "can you guess why I wished to see you?"

"To speak about the room, I suppose, Miss," Talbot said, slowly, his eyelids coming down just a little over his dark eyes.

"No; guess again!" she exclaimed.

"I can not guess," he replied.

"Shall I tell you?"

"If it will please you," was his non-committal reply.

"Then you do not care to know?" she asked, a strange expression upon her features.

"Why should I care?" he said, apparently puzzled at the question.

"I'll tell you, and then you will plainly see why you should care," she exclaimed, just a little bit of impatience in her manner. "I wished to see you, because I thought that you might be able to tell me something of my cousin, Patrick Gwyne."

Talbot looked at the fair girl for a moment, an expression of blank amazement upon his face; then he spoke:

"You expected that I would tell you something about your cousin?" astonishment in his voice as in his face.

"Yes," replied Bernice, firmly.

"I can not understand why you should think so," he said, slowly.

"Look at me!" she said, imperiously, but the sweetness of the clear tone was full pardon for the manner.

"Well?" Talbot's eyes were fixed on her face.

"Am I blind?"

"No."

"Do you think that I can not recognize you, even though years have passed?"

Again Dick looked utterly astonished.

"It is a hard matter to recognize one whom you have never seen before," he said, slowly.

"Do you mean to say that I have never seen you before?" she asked, quickly.

"Before last night, never!" he replied, firmly.

"How can you say such a thing?" she said, earnestly. "My woman's eyes have read the truth, even though ten years have changed you a great deal. Ten years ago your cheek was as white as my hand, your chin as beardless as mine; and now, even though your face is bronzed by sun and wind, and your chin covered by a beard, I know you."

"And who am I?" he asked, quietly.

"Your name is not Talbot!" she replied, quickly.

"Possibly," he said, carelessly, "in this wild region, the refuge of men whose crimes have outlawed them from civilization, few men are known by their right names."

"Could I not speak your name if I wished to?" she asked, suddenly, fixing her eyes upon his face, with a look as though she would read the truth in his eyes, despite his efforts to conceal it.

A moment Injun Dick looked into the beautiful face, so radiant with youth, health and freshness; then again, cat-fashion, his eyelids came half-way down over his eyes.

"No, you can not speak my name," he said, in a firm, clear tone, which betrayed no trace of hesitation.

"Shall I try?" she asked, a touch of reproach in her voice and a mournful look in her large eyes.

"Just as you please," he replied, in a tone of thorough unconcern.

"Why do you attempt to deceive me?" she exclaimed, petulantly, her face betraying deep emotion.

"I am not attempting to deceive you," he said, calmly, his manner forming a strange contrast with hers. "You think that you have detected in my face a resemblance to some one—who, of course, I know not. Because I do not allow you to continue in your error, and do not admit that I am the person you think I am, you accuse me of deceiving you."

"Why did you hide your face from me in the saloon last night? Why did you faint—like a woman—when you caught sight of my features in the window last night? And why, when I encountered you here, a moment ago, did you turn pale and then look around as if you wished to fly from me, as if I were a wild beast?"

Quick and earnest came the eager questions from Bernice's full lips.

"Miss, when I tell you who and what I am, perhaps you will understand why your presence has affected me so strangely—for I would attempt to deny the truth of what you have just said," Dick answered, slowly. "I am Dick Talbot, the man who wears broadcloth and fine linen, and who plays cards for a living—injun Dick, the gambler! that's what I am; not the fit sort of a gentleman to talk to a lady like you. I'm a human wolf—a panther—that preys upon honest men; robs them of their hard-earned gold-dust, and takes in five minutes what cost days of toil, maybe, to win. Like all men who follow cards for a living, I believe in luck. For two days before the one on which you came to this place, I had a run of bad luck. I noticed that, every time I lost my money, the queen of hearts had something to do with it. If I had a pair of Jacks—a pretty fair hand to bet on, Miss—somebody else had a pair of queens, and one of them was sure to be the queen of hearts. So, when you came into the Eldorado last night, the moment I set eyes on you, I saw that you were a heart-woman—that is, you know in fortune-telling the queen of hearts would represent you. And the moment my eyes fell upon your face something whispered in my ear that you were fated to bring bad luck to me. I made up my mind to 'levant'—get out—leave Spur City till you left it; but luck was against me there, too, for things have worked so that I am obliged to stay here. Now that you know who and what I am, it must be clear to you that I am not the person you have taken me to be."

Attentively Bernice had listened to Talbot's story.

"You will not confess the truth, then?" she said, mournfully.

"What! ain't you convinced yet?" he exclaimed, in astonishment.

"Yes, convinced that you are the man I think you are. You cannot deceive me!" cried Bernice, impulsively. "And I will never leave this place until I make you confess the truth."

"You'll stay here a long time, then, Miss," Talbot said, quietly.

"No; something—I know not what—tells me you will acknowledge that I have guessed rightly before many days are over."

"If you stay here, long, Miss, I feel sure that it will end in my being put into a hole in the ground," Talbot said, seriously. "You're going to bring me bad luck."

"How can that be?"

"I can't tell, but I'm certain it's in the cards," he replied. "Why, men who follow my business out in these regions walk over quicksands; there's no knowing when we'll sink, and when once we go through the crust, we are pretty sure not to stop until the sands close over our heads. The Vigilantes may rise right here in

Spur City and string me up to the nearest tree at any time."

Bernice had little idea of the terrible meaning of the simple word "Vigilantes."

"No one will dare to punish you unless you commit a crime," she said.

"I am committing one every day by living here. Am I not a black sheep—a gambler? Judge Lynch has small mercy on gentlemen of my craft when he once gets his hand in. And now, Miss, let me advise you not to be seen talking with me. I am not fit company for you. Only the rough miners associate with Injun Dick. Why, I am not only a gambler, but I am a bruiser—a fighting man. Give me a wide berth, Miss; it will be better for both of us."

"By my actions in the future you shall see how I regard your counsel."

Bernice turned and walked back toward the town. Dick gazed after her with a strange expression upon his face.

CHAPTER XIV.

A MAN THINKING OF MURDER.

WITH a light step Bernice hastened onward. She came to the turn in the road; a few more paces would conceal her from the sight of Talbot.

She halted, turned and waved her hand in farewell. A moment more, and she disappeared behind the pines.

A long breath of relief came from Dick's lips. It seemed as if a weight had been lifted from off his soul.

"Thank Heaven, it's over!" he exclaimed.

"This girl is as beautiful as an angel; and as good, too, as she is beautiful. Oh! what cursed ill luck ever brought her in my way! I love her! I feel the passion swelling in my heart—the vain, idle, foolish passion. I might as well seek to pull down the pine peaks of yonder sierra, or uproot the pine that grows on its side, as to hope—to dream—of ever winning this pure and beautiful girl. I'd give ten years of my life, though, for her!" And he clenched his hands firmly as he spoke, and the close white teeth came down with a sharp, tiger-like click.

"Oh, what folly!" he murmured, after a pause, and he let his head fall mournfully upon his breast.

"Ten years of my life wouldn't be worth much, anyway. If those fellows in black who trapped me last night keep their word, I haven't got ten days to give, let alone ten years. But I'll fight 'em, though! Injun Dick is not to be bullied out of this here ranch. I've played enough of a bluff game in my life, and I never called a man until my pile was up. I reckon, though, I won't 'chip in' many times more. I've about gone to the end of my rope; maybe I'll dangle at the end of one soon, but I'll die game!"

Dick had expressed his thoughts aloud. Around him was naught but rocks and nodding pines; that is, to his view, for Injun Dick had no suspicion that a man concealed behind a clump of bushes, some ten paces from him, had overheard the interview between himself and Bernice, as well as his muttered thoughts.

Talbot sauntered leisurely up the road toward the town, but the listener who was stretched out at full length behind the bushes still kept his place.

Judge Jones sat in the express-office before the table that served him as a desk. The drawer of the table was open, and in it, amid the papers, glistened the polished barrel of a revolver and the broad blade of a keen-edged bowie-knife.

The eyes of the Judge were fixed upon the weapons, and a heavy frown was upon his brow.

"It must come to it, sooner or later," he murmured, nervously; then he took the revolver from the drawer and examined it. It was loaded and capped.

There was a dark look in the stern eyes of the Judge as he drew back the hammer of the weapon, and watched the play of the well-oiled lock.

If ever the word "murder" was written plainly on the face of a man, it was then on the strongly-marked features of Judge Jones.

He laid the revolver down on the table, got up and paced up and down the room for a few moments, his eyes glaring and his features convulsed by strong emotions.

"It must come!" again he murmured. Then he paused before the table and took up the revolver; again he tried the workings of the lock.

"To think that a half-dozen lives are at the mercy of this little toy in the hands of a resolute man. If I quarreled with a bully—this Injun Dick, for instance—in a drinking-saloon, he would shoot me down with as little remorse as though I were a mad dog. Why should I hesitate then?"

The Judge drew the revolver up and leveled it over his arm at the wall of the office, as though he were drawing a "head" at the head of a foe. His eyes glared and his teeth were clenched together.

"Do you know anything about this out-law?"

"I reckon I do," Joe replied, confidently. "I understand that there's a heap of money offered for Kit?"

"Yes."

"S'pose one of his men comes to you and offers to fix things, so that you can corral Kit; would you pay the man the money and git him a pardon for what he had done?"

"Certainly."

"I'm your man then, by hokey!" cried Joe. "I kin put Overland Kit into your hands."

"When?" asked the Judge, eagerly.

"Inside of two hours."

"You can? Where is he?"

"Why, right hyer."

"Here?" questioned the Judge, in amazement.

"Yes, hyer in Spur City; he's got his disguise off now, though, but I kin swear to his voice!" cried Joe, full of confidence.

CHAPTER XV.

GAUS STRIKES A "LEAD."

The sun had sunk behind the snow-white peaks far off in the west, and the gloom of the twilight was gathering thick over river, valley and mountain range.

Spur City was alive with red-shirted, big-booted miners. Dim lights were shining from the few windows that the mining-camp possessed, and whisky-drinking and card-playing were going on briskly.

Young Rennet coming up the street encountered at the door of the Eldorado a man who has not appeared before in our story, although spoken of.

The man was Gaus Tendall. In appearance he was about the medium height, not very stoutly built; the contour of his face regular, blue eyes—rather handsome eyes, but shifting and uncertain; light yellow hair that curled in crisp ringlets all over his head.

At the first glance that Rennet gave at his friend, he saw that something was the matter with him. There was a look of exultation upon his face that was not usually there, for Tendall was one of the habitually unlucky fellows who never succeed in any undertaking, and his face was generally gloomy and overcast.

"Hallo, Jim, my boy!" ejaculated Tendall, slapping Rennet on the shoulder. "I've been looking all over the town for you. I've been in every drinking-place from here to Paddy's Flat, hunting you, and have 'pisoned' myself in every one."

"Why, you must be flush, then," Rennet said, a little puzzled, for he knew that that very morning Tendall hadn't a dollar.

"Flush! Well, you bet!" cried his friend, in triumph. "Shall I lend you ten?" and he drew a handful of silver from his pocket as he spoke.

"Where the deuce did you get your money?" asked Rennet, in astonishment.

"Oh, I've struck a 'lead!' replied Gaus, with an affectation of careless unconcern.

"Not up in the gully?"

"No, down here in the city."

"The deuce you have?"

"Fact!" exclaimed Tendall, triumphantly.

"Been playing poker?"

"Did you ever know me to win anything at cards?"

"Never!" replied Rennet, emphatically.

"Well, I didn't get this that way. I've struck 'pay-dirt,' partner; and I'll bet that the strike will be worth four oughts before I get through with it."

"What the deuce have you tumbled into?" questioned Rennet, in amazement.

"A pocketful of gold-dust, old pard!" cried Tendall, gaily; "it's more slaying for me; the mines up the gully may go to Old Nick, for all I care; I'll make you a present of my interest in Wildcat, No. 1."

"See here, Gaus, you've got too much whisky on board!"

"Fuller's a tick, you bet! How's that for high?" and Tendall hit Rennet another vigorous slap on the shoulder.

"Are you crazy?"

"With joy!" replied Tendall. "The fact is, Jim, I've discovered a leetle secret, and to have me keep my mouth shut, somebody pays me well. Do you see? I'm all right for the best room in the Eldorado, hereafter."

"Oh! it's something that concerns Miss Jimmie, eh?"

"Did I say it was?" demanded Tendall, with an air of wisdom. "I say, Jim, I've been celebrating pretty free, but I know what I'm about, and you can't pump me."

"Who's trying to?" asked the Judge, with a laugh. "I suppose though that you have discovered who backs Miss Jimmie in running the Eldorado, eh?"

"Well, maybe I have and maybe I haven't," replied Tendall, with a wink; "but come in and we'll have a bottle of wine, that is, if they've got such a thing here; and I don't believe they have."

As the two entered the Eldorado, they encountered the old lawyer. Rennet introduced his friend to his father. The old gentleman begged to be excused, when Tendall pressed him to join himself and "Jim," and proceeded up-stairs, leaving the two young men in the saloon.

The old lawyer went at once to Bernice's room. He found the young girl seated by the window, peering out into the darkness, for, by this time, the shadows of the twilight had deepened into the somber gloom of the night.

A single candle burning on the little table, alone lighted up the room.

"Well, my dear," said the old lawyer, after entering the little apartment, "I hope that you are pretty well satisfied by this time with this detestable place. I think that we had better make up our minds to return to New York as soon as possible."

"What I came to seek," Bernice replied.

"Oh, hain't James told you?"

"Told me what?"

"Why about the miner who witnessed the death of your cousin, Patrick?"

"His death?"

"Yes, and I told you that he was dead."

"Patrick Gwynne is not dead!" replied Bernice, decidedly.

"Oh, yes, my dear, he is!" exclaimed the lawyer. "James met a miner to-day who told him all the particulars of the theft. Why, he even saw him buried. A man, you know, don't come up out of the ground."

"Patrick Gwynne has?" Bernice exclaimed.

"Eh?" Rennet was astonished.

"He can't be in his grave."

"Why not?"

"Because I have seen him to-day!" replied Bernice, firmly.

"My dear girl, are you in possession of your senses?" Rennet exclaimed.

"I think that I am perfectly sane," Bernice said, smiling. "I repeat; I have not only seen, but spoken with Patrick Gwynne to-day."

"You have?"

"Yes, and before many days you shall see him also. He is now disguising himself under a false name."

"Bless me, you really astonish me," said Rennet, rather bewildered. His little plan for deceiving in regard to the fate of Patrick Gwynne had entirely failed. "I must go and tell James the news," and he hurried from the room.

Bernice again gazed out of the window. Strange thoughts were in her mind; again she stood in the lonely canyon, and held the interview with the man called Injun Dick.

"Can it be that I am fated to be his bad angel?" she murmured, gazing out into the darkness of the night as though she expected to see there the answer to her question.

The sudden opening of the door of her room drew her attention from the window. She turned her head and a figure met her eyes that filled her soul with a strange terror.

Within the room, the door closed behind him, a black mask over his face, stood the road-agent, Overland Kit!

(To be continued—commenced in No. 264.)

Plain Jane.

BY MATTIE DYER BRITTS.

"Well, girls, you can decide it among you, but somebody will have to be here to receive Mr. Hastings, of course."

"I can't stay, ma," said Arabella, "I wouldn't miss the wedding for anything, and besides, Lucy's cousin, Lieutenant Osborn, is to be there, and who knows what may happen?" and the beauty gave a simper and a toss of her head.

Augusta was another beauty, and a musician besides, so she gave a simper and two tosses, as she tartly replied: "Nothing will come of it to you, Miss, for I intend to capture Lieutenant Osborn myself."

"Yes, I know you are the oldest, and ought to marry first," returned Arabella, spitefully, "but it don't follow you will. In fact, I shouldn't wonder if you had to 'be an old maid, and take your stool, and sit in the shade' at last."

"You shut up!" was Augusta's sisterly retort.

And here Jane interposed to keep the peace. "I'll stay, ma. I would like to be at Lucy's wedding, but some one must be here, and it will save the expense of three dresses, anyhow."

"Ye-es," said Mrs. Locke, half hesitating, for she knew it always fell to the lot of little Jane to give up the new dresses and stay at home.

"It will be as much as I can do to fix Bell and Gus up, and Mr. Hastings' board will be a great help to us—twelve dollars a week is a big item to us. I'll be glad if you will stay, Jane dear. I'd stay myself, but of course I ought to go to chaperone the girls."

"Yes, I want you to go. I don't mind staying at all," said Jane, bravely, for it was a disappointment to her.

"Of course as old Comfort and John are here, there's nothing improper in your being left to meet a single gentleman, and I'm glad to have it settled," said Mrs. Locke, with a sigh of relief.

"How do you know he is a single gentleman?" asked Arabella, with a sudden interest.

"He said he was a widower with no family. He looked like a gentleman, too, girls. But I don't know what his business is," said Mrs. Locke.

"Oh, well, we will leave him for Jane," laughed Arabella. "I'll take the lieutenant, and Gus can set her cap for some other rich fellow, and Jane can have the widower, and you can take him for a permanent boarder, ma."

"I don't want anybody," said Jane, pleasantly.

"If I'm going to help you trim your white boucées, Bell, we ought to be at work, for there's no time to be lost."

"I'll never get through by myself, that's a good girl to help me, so we'll go right at it," said Arabella, tossing over a fleecy mountain of soft tulle and ribbons. But when the work was done, Jane's small fingers had put in nine-tenths of the stitches, and Arabella's time had been spent lolling on the sofa, lamenting that she was so 'good-for-nothing,' and wouldn't know what to do without Jane. And that, Miss Arabella, was quite true!

The wedding to which they were going was one at Morristown, a distance of twenty miles, and would oblige them to remain over night.

So the next morning the stage drove up to the door, and Mrs. Locke and her two elder daughters, in stylish poplins, went off to the merry-making, while plain Jane in her blue gingham dress and white bib-apron stood on the doorstep and saw them depart.

And then, with a tiny little sigh, Jane went into the house and up the stairs, for the gentleman from the city who was coming out to board through the hot weather, was to arrive that very day, and there was nice touches about his cool, handsome room which must not be left for the sable fingers of old Comfort, and were not within the province of John, the sole waiter and errand-boy, gardener and general factotum of the little establishment.

Mr. Hastings was not going to leave his business—perhaps if he had been, as they supposed, a wealthy gentleman of leisure, Augusta and Arabella would have thought him worth staying at home for. But he wanted, as he said, a quiet, homelike place to rest in during the hot weather, and would come down every evening and go back every morning, taking his dinner in the city, but staying down over Sunday each week.

So Jane had ample time to attend to all her duties before he came. The beauties couldn't be expected to spoil their white hands with household labor, but she was only plain Jane, whom nobody ever noticed, and her duties were manifold.

But they were done at last. She had even helped Comfort to stir up the jelly-cake, and picked the strawberries for tea with her own hands, and had time to change her blue gingham for a cool muslin dress and a little black silk apron, before the whistle of the down-train from the city gave notice that the new boarder would soon appear.

Old Comfort answered his ring, and with some trepidation Jane went down to meet him in the parlor. She was somewhat surprised at the tall, gentlemanly-looking man with such courtly manners, who rose and extended his hand, saying so pleasantly:

"This is not my hostess, I think?"

"No, sir. Only her youngest daughter, Jane," answered she, explaining and excusing the absence of her mother and sisters. He placed a chair for her, as politely as if she had been a princess, instead of a little nobody, and talked so pleasantly a few minutes that Jane was surprised at herself for venturing to say so much.

Then she offered to show him to his room before supper, and made him free of the parlor whenever he felt like coming down.

And when he did come down, she bashfully invited him out to tea, which was spread in a cool, green-latticed and vine-wreathed porch with a view overlooking the blue hills and the distant river.

The fragrant tea, snowy-white rolls, pink slices of cold ham, delicate jelly-cake, and luscious strawberries blushing through the little freshets of pure, sweet cream Jane poured over them, and above all the country coolness and freshness, were very delightful to Mr. Hastings.

Nor did he find plain Jane herself an unlovely object to look upon. Indeed, though nothing could make her a beauty like her pink-and-white-and-golden sisters, she was not plain Jane by any means as she sat and poured the tea.

Her little figure was always trim and dainty; her hands small and shapely, and just now her brown hair was smooth and glossy, her eyes shining, and a little embarrassment lent a faint, pink glow to the cheeks usually so pale and fallow.

No, Jane was not a beauty, but she was sweet and womanly to look upon, and her gentle, modest deportment made her more attractive in Mr. Hastings' eyes than the dashing, unabashed belles he was so tired of mingling with and being courted by.

Because—But I will let Miss Augusta and Miss Arabella tell the news as they told it to Jane when they came home, perhaps a little earlier than they otherwise might, the next morning.

"Well, did he come?" asked Miss Augusta, before they were fairly in the house.

"The new boarder? Yes," answered Jane.

"Is he here now?"

"No, he went back to the city this morning."

"He'll be down again to-night, I suppose. Who do you think he is, Jane? Lewis' folks know all about him, and told us."

"I don't know, I'm sure," answered Jane, smiling.

"Why, he's the Hastings, of the great wholesale silk firm, with branches in I don't know how many cities. And he owns ever so many blocks, and a splendid city residence, and he's worth a million or two at the least. Just think of his coming here to us!"

When Mr. Hastings came down from the city that night, he found the beauties at home, fully arrayed for conquest. And verily Solomon in all his glory never even dreamed of being arrayed like they were!

They made the supper-table very gay, but in his heart Mr. Hastings would have preferred the cozy little strawberry tea-table and the quiet home spirit of the evening before.

He did not lack for attention the rest of the summer, I can assure you. Miss Augusta—ung and played to him, and Miss Arabella read poetry to him, and both of them vied with each other in delicate attentions to him, while plain Jane, as he quietly observed, tripped about and kept his room in exquisite order.

Mr. Hastings was attentive to the ladies, too. He sometimes brought down his handsome horses and took them for a drive, or read a new book to them, or presented them with some rare flowers or choice fruit; and Mrs. Locke smiled complacently, and could not make up her mind which, but felt quite sure one of her daughters would spend the winter in that elegant city residence.

At first Mr. Hastings included Jane in his invitations to walk or ride, but Jane was always busy and couldn't go, so after a while he ceased to ask her. And Jane only gave a quiet little sigh, and went about her duties with a little hope that Mr. Hastings would choose one of her sisters, for he would be such a good, kind brother!

One evening, when the summer was nearly gone, Mrs. Locke and the beauties were out making calls, and Jane was sitting at the parlor window, finishing some dainty piece of work, all lace and ruffles, for her sister Arabella, when Mr. Hastings came in.

He explained his early appearance by saying he had a headache and felt tired, and so had returned by the four-o'clock train instead of waiting till six as usual.

"The season is almost over, and my hour in this cozy home will be few at the most," he said, with the grave, pleasant smile Jane had learned to know so well.

"We shall all be sorry to have you go," she said, quietly.

"Will you? Well, I am glad, in this case, that you are sorry," he said, gaily. Then he added, more seriously: "The truth is, Miss Jane, your mother and her daughters have made my home so pleasant to me this summer that I have come to the conclusion that I cannot return to my city home unless she will kindly let me take one of them with me, to brighten my fusties there."

Jane bent over her work, and her color came and her voice was unsteady as she answered:

"I am sure they—she—whichever one of the girls you choose will be very happy, sir."

"Do you think she will?" asked Mr. Hastings.

"She could not help it," said Jane, heading steadily over her work.

"And which one shall I choose?" asked Mr. Hastings.

"Oh, do not ask me—how can I tell?" said Jane.

"Which one do you think would love me best?" persisted Mr. Hastings, looking intently at her.

Poor Jane grew a deeper crimson, and bent down so she could not see her face at all, only shaking her head for a reply.

"Well, then," said Mr. Hastings, lightly, "since you will tell me nothing, I must tell you everything. My choice is made, little Jane! Look up, and let me show her to you."

Wondering, and half frightened, Jane raised her blushing, confused face, and Mr. Hastings, lifting her from her chair, led her across the room to the great mirror over the marble-topped table.

There she is; look at her," said he.

Jane looked at her own reflection, then up into Mr. Hastings' face, her own picture of pleading distress.

"Me? Oh, no! no! You do not mean it!" she cried, covering her burning cheeks with her hands.

He took the hands fast prisoners in his own, encircled the shrinking little form with his arm, and said in a tone not to be misunderstood:

"But I do mean it, and I have meant it ever since that first evening when I came here, and you met me, and cared for me, like the dear little home-angel you are. Say, my little Jane, can't you love me?"

"Oh, yes! But I—I am so plain!" faltered Jane.

"No, you are not plain! You are all sweet, all lovely to me, as I know you are all good!" cried Mr. Hastings. "Come, Jane, my little darling! I have you here, and I mean to hold you till you say you will be my little wife, and let your mother be my mother and your sisters my sisters, and I will care for them as a son and a brother should. Come, Jane! it is you or no, my darling?"

The mother and sisters were heard at the front door, at that moment, so Jane hastily answered, "It is yes! Let me go, please!"

And stopping only to kiss her once, and to say, "Thank you and bless you, love! I shall tell them as soon as they come in," Mr. Hastings released his captive, and she flew away to her own room.

The astonishment of the mother and the beauties, when they learned that plain Jane was the rich and elegant Mr. Hastings' choice, was utterly unbounded. But, after all, the girls thought, if you can't be a millionaire's wife, the next best thing is to be a millionaire's sister; and the money was in the family, anyhow. So they all made the best of it, and the most of Jane, and in all the great city you won't find to-day a happier wife than little plain Jane.

What Frightened Bob Carter

BY FRANK H. CONVERSE.

BOB CARTER was sixty-five years old and wore spectacles—which latter institution is as uncommon among the seafaring fraternity as a wooden leg would be.

And yet the old man was always the first one aloft in "shortening sail"—could take as good a trick at the wheel as any one on board—and, to all appearances, was as smart and active as any of our crew.

"Rather a hard life for a man of your years, Bob," said I, one night, after four hours of shortening sail in a nor'-wester on the Banks of Newfoundland, in which it had seemed as though the half-furled sails would have blown from the yards, before we could secure them, so stiff and iced up were they with the frozen sleet.

The old ship, cotton-loaded from Mobile for Liverpool, was now laying to under close-reefed main-top-sail and fore-staysail, making very good weather of it, as cotton ships generally do when hoisted to, and seldom taking any water on board, though a terrible sea was running, and the wind was shrieking through the tautened weather-rigging with a sound that one never hears at any other time, and which will make one think of home, if anything will.

We were stretched out on a spar lashed under the weather-bulwarks, longing for our weary watch to come to an end, though there were still three hours of exposure to cold and darkness.

"You," answered Bob, "it is a hard life, specially for any one who has known a better one—as I fancy you have."

"Never mind me, Bob," said I, somewhat hastily; for I seldom, in those days, spoke of my past, "but give us the yarn—how you happened to be here, at your age."

"It's the old story; nothing very singular or strange—that part of it ain't," answered the old man, sorrowfully; "though there's been enough in my life that was strange. I've been in the 'Sailors' Snug Harbor,' over to Staten Island, for goin' on 'leven year," continued Bob, "until six weeks ago. I was jest such an ol' fool as to go over to New York with about fourteen dollars that I'd made weavin' basket-work."

"An' of course I couldn't keep away from places where I should be like to find some of my ol' shipmates; an' the most likely place to find an ol' sailor lays down round Water and Cherry streets, where a man 'ud get 'shook down' for a dollar, quicker'n he could say 'knife.'"

"It was forty-two year that I hadn't touched a drop of whisky, an' the way I happened to leave off is the strange thing that I'm goin' to tell you of, 'fore I get through."

"An' I loved that it would take a smart man to get a drop down my throat, an' so I went into Tommy H—'s Sailor Boardin' House, an' ran across Joe Howard an' two or three other chaps, that was in the ship Mogul with me a couple of 'vages before."

"Well—it ain't worth while tellin' the rest that went on while I was there. I woke up next mornin' an' found myself in the fo'castle of the ol' ship Mary Bangs, with a splittin' headache, a bag of ol' sailor duds, an' bound to Mobile."

"I've been 'shanghied' once before, an' I never was so mad in all my born days. Men was scarce then, an' was havin' thirty-five dollars for the run to Mobile, so Tommy H— had drugged my liquor, got my advances, an' shoved me aboard the Mary Bangs, do'd drink—a trick that he's been playin' on ol' sailors 'or twenty year, more or less, an' they always threaten to kill him if ever they get back—an' never do."

"That's how I come here; I stayed by in Mobile, an' got enough shirts to las' me across, an' am makin' the best of it."

"And how was it that you knocked off drinkin'?" said I, as Bob heaved a long sigh for the comforts of the 'Sailors' Snug Harbor,' and bit off a piece of tobacco.

"Oh, that's another thing," said the old man, "but I don't mind tellin' you, seein' it's two hours yet to eight bells, and settlin' himself down on the spar, Bob commenced:

"When I was twenty year old, I was jest the most reckless chap that ever you heard of. An' in them days, it's fair to say that I didn't care for man, an' I never thought of God, an' so I went from bad to wus."

"What made me so is neither here nor there—there was a woman to the bottom of it, as there most generally is to all deviltry, an' so I shipped 'fore the mast in a smuggler, an' since that time, up to the time I partly lost my eyesight through bein' struck by lightning on the river Platte, I've sailed under ev'ry flag that floats, 'cept the Chinese, an' seen the world over an' over agin'."

"In '85, I was to Barbaders, mate of a little schooner, tradin' for shells, mahogany, an' palm oil, an' the like, out of New York, an' the schooner Phoebe laid 'longside of us, owned by the same owners, an' in the same business."

"Ever hear tell of the 'flowerin' cove,' that lays inside the lagoon to the west'ard of us?" asked Bill Hunter, mate of the Phoebe, as we sat fightin' sandflies an' smokin' one evenin' after we'd knocked off work."

"I'd heard the darkeys say somethin' about it bein' an 'Obi' place, as they call anything that seems like witchery to them, an' so I told him, an' we made up with a couple of the men, and a darkey or two to show us the way, to row over there the next evening, before night-fall, which, when the time came, we did."

"We got inside the line of surf without any trouble, an' rowed direct for the mouth of the cove—a little land-locked piece of smooth water, not more'n thirty rod or so, square."

"When we got within ten or twelve foot of the mouth of the cove we eased our oars, as the darkeys bid us."

"The top of the water was white with posies, that looked for all the world like v'lets, only they was white."

"After we'd looked at 'em a spell, we rowed into the cove, an' whether you b'lieve me or not, they disappeared like littenin'."

"S'pose you lay still on oar, you see 'em 'gain,' said our darkey cook, as we stared at one another; an' sure enough, as we kep' still, first one would shoot up, then another, then another, till there was perhaps twenty of 'em in sight, but not one within ten or twelve foot of the boat."

"We fooled round for some time, tryin' to get hold of one, but the mimit you'd make a speck of noise, under they'd go, an' as the surf was beginnin' to break on the bar outside, an' the darkeys got sca'r'd, we had to leave."

"Next night we was goin' ashore nigh the same place, an' owin' to not understandin' how to run a boat through the surf, Sam Welch, who was steerin', upstod her, an' pitched us all inter the water."

"There was four of us—Sam, Bill Hunter, Charley Decker, an' a chap that called himself Sullivan—a reg'lar desperado he was, too, an' what was curi's, he couldn't swim, for all he'd been goin' to sea for twenty or thirty year."

"We all got safe to shore but him; an' I think the boat must 'a' knocked him on the head, for we found him where the sea washed him up, an hour or so after, all drawn up, his knees most touchin' his chin, an' his arms sort of before his face, an' a big bruise on his temple."

"We carried him up to the only house there was, where an ole Scotch carpenter by the name of Thompson, who'd run away from a whaler thirty year before, an' settled there, lived, an' we tried to bring him to, but it war n't no use. Our boat was stove, so we couldn't get back aboard, an' there was a storm comin' up, so we laid Sullivan out in one of the two rooms on a board, put across two chairs, an' hopin' that his lim's would come strait, so we could bury him decent nex' day, we lashed him to the board with some pieces of cord, an' I went into the next room."

"Thompson was an ol' reprobate anyway, an' by his talk he'd done most everything that was crooked, not leavin' out piratin', if what he said was true, but as I said, I wasn't none too squeamish, an' had seen some queer com-p'ny in my day; so when the ole man brought out a bottle of Santa Cruz rum, we took some all round, an' as it was rainin' like cats and dogs, with now an' then a growl of thunder, some of 'em proposed a hand of cards to pass away the time."

"Well, it came on to thunder an' lightning, an' blow, as it only can do in the tropics, but we kep' at our cards, till on a sudden I heard a noise in the room where Sullivan laid."

"Hold on, boys," said I. "The cat has got in the room—'or cats is the master hands to know where anybody lays dead, an' I'd seen one round the house, an

GOING TO CHURCH.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

I recollect when Sue and I
First went to church together,
Because it was the very worst
Kind of December weather.

I wasn't feeling very brave—
In fact the trip I dreaded;
I hadn't anything to say—
And I believe I said it.

We entered church; I led the way;
A terrible ordeal!
A hundred eyes were bent on me—
I thought, "Can this be real?"

I found a vacant pew, and there
I sat my little charmer;
I somehow felt quite tremulous
And wished it was some warmer.

The solemn stillness tried me sore;
I did not set there proudly;
I made a movement with my foot
And struck the footstool loudly.

I knew the boys were making sport,
And all the girls a-snoozing;
I felt my breath was growing short,
And all the lights were flickering.

But then we all rose up to sing;
The hymn it was a long one;
Till the last verses I sat down—
But each time at the wrong one.

I knew the boys at school next day
Would make me fore and after;
And if there's anything to dread,
It is a schoolboy's laughter.

But how serene my maiden sat,
Lost to all things around her;
While I lost confidence in myself
My faith in her grew sounder.

I sat there wishing that I was
In some lone desert region,
And in my restlessness I lost
A good deal of religion.

The sermon lengthened as it went,
And seemed to get no thinner;
I thought the parson preached at me,
And felt myself a sinner.

My hands seemed far too numerous
By something like a dozen;
Yet all the while I sat as straight
As if I had been frozen.

And going home I made a vow,
But held it with my teeth in;
That ere I'd take another girl to church be-
fore I got used to it.

I'd live and die a heathen.

LEAVES

From a Lawyer's Life.

BY A. GOULD PENN.

III.—Convicting the Court.

"TELEGRAM, sir!" shouted a small messenger-boy, as he dashed into my office, and handed me one of the familiar brown envelopes. Mechanically I took it from his hand. Telegrams were usually nothing surprising to me, and supposing it to be some ordinary business message, I leisurely tore open the envelope to read its contents.

The message was short, but its contents surprised me very much; it read:

"HARRISON, Nov. 10, 18—
"To Y. A. SMITH, Attorney—Come down and see me at once. I am in trouble; arrested for murder."
"WILLIAM SMITH."

William Smith! Cousin Will, as I used to call him in our boyhood days. I had not seen him for some years, and knew nothing of his whereabouts, yet he had been schoolmates and boys together. But, cousin Will was inclined to be, as I considered, a little wild, and at last it had culminated as the telegram indicated. Arrested for murder! Not so bad as that I hoped, but yet I must go to him and see what assistance I could render.

The next train left for Harrison at eleven o'clock; plenty of time for me to prepare, and accordingly I set about it, and reached the depot in good time for the train. Soon I was comfortably seated in the car, and an hour's ride sufficed to bring us into the Union Depot at Harrison.

Hailing a cab, I requested to be set down at the county jail, and a ride of a few moments found me at that stronghold; so, discharging the cabman, I made my way into the building.

A slight acquaintance with the jailer sufficed to procure an entrance to William Smith's cell. There sat the prisoner on his couch, with his face buried in his hands, and a look of misery and dejection about him that touched my heart. Glancing up at my entrance, he recognized me, and with a cry of joy sprang to his feet and gave me a hearty embrace.

"William!" I exclaimed.

"Andy, my dear old boy!" and a hearty shake from William.

Andy was my schoolboy name, and it was but natural that my friend should so call me.

When he had calmed down somewhat, William began to talk.

"Yes, Andy, again we meet, after three years of separation, but I never thought it would be in a felon's cell. I have been a wild fellow, Andy, but God knows I never was so low as to commit murder."

His manner at once convinced me of his innocence. His story was soon told. In company with a friend from the country, a young man named Joseph Greer, he had visited one of the fashionable saloons of the city, and after both were duly warmed up with liquor they had been induced to enter a back room, up-stairs, where the gaming was usually going on.

"I was too fond of cards, Andy, and I persuaded my friend Greer to have a social game. We both had money, and we were both too much intoxicated to be cautious. We found two strange gentlemen seated at the table, and we joined them in a game, at their earnest request. Greer and I were both a little boisterous and in the progress of the game we disputed and had some high words."

"One of the strangers, I remember him well, he was a tall man with a frowning countenance, black hair and short, black beard, ordered some beer, which the waiter-boy brought; but, just at this juncture, one of the strangers disputed a deal, which inflamed both Greer and I, and we all four sprang to our feet with drawn pistols. A blow from the fist of some one put out the candle, and at the same instant a shot was fired, and all was confusion."

"The rest you know. I was at once taken into custody for the murder of Greer, and the two strangers were nowhere to be found."

Such was the prisoner's story, and it looked dark, indeed, to me, but I would try to unravel the mystery, and so assuring William I left him in his gloomy prison.

Going to the hotel, I there met a man whom I knew.

"Good day, Smith! What brings you to Harrison?"

"John Homer!" I exclaimed, joyfully—"the very man of all others I most wished to see at this moment!" and I grasped the hand of my friend, one of the shrewdest detectives in the State.

I ordered a room and we were shown into it, and I at once proceeded to plan with Homer

to discover the real murderer of Joseph Greer.

He entered readily into the search, and from his knowledge of the place and parties he had great hopes of success.

I visited and secured the assistance of a legal friend in Harrison, and had a long conversation with him in his office. His name was James T. Janson, and I knew him to be a man of talent from former association, and afterward had the pleasure of seeing him on the bench.

"When is your next session of court?" I asked of him.

"Just two months," he answered.

"Who is your judge?"

"We have a new judge, now—his name is Crandall, and I hear him well spoken of, as far as his legal ability is concerned, but I also hear that his private character is not what it should be."

I returned home, my mind filled with plans for future action, and resumed the routine of my office.

Again I visited Harrison. Court was then in session, and the grand jury had found a true bill of indictment against William Smith for the murder, in the second degree, of one Joseph Greer.

In due time the case was called, and the prisoner arraigned at the bar of the court. Judge Crandall was on the bench, and I took a mental inventory of the man, and of course a dislike, amounting to aversion.

There was something of the relentless, hard and cruel disposition in his judicial conduct, but withal I was struck by his profound legal skill and learning.

Homer, the detective, was promptly on hand, and to my joy told me that he had made some important discoveries, and that he would not tell me all until he testified at the trial. With this assurance I was obliged to be content, and, with my friend Janson to assist me, the trial was commenced.

The testimony against my poor client was strong and convincing. His conduct toward the deceased began to tell with force upon the minds of the jury, and I began to fear that all was lost, when a glance at the detective, Homer, assured me that all was still well.

Jack Snead, the waiter-boy, a lad of sixteen, was then called to the stand, and told apparently a very straight story. Homer took his seat at my elbow and suggested to me while I cross-examined him.

"You say you saw this man, the prisoner, draw his pistol and fire at the deceased?" I demanded, with sternness.

Homer fixed his eagle eyes on the boy and I saw a quiver of his lips as he faltered out:

"Yes, sir."

"Did you know either of the parties at that table?"

"No, sir."

"Would you recollect either of their faces if you saw them again?"

"I—I think I would."

"What was your position in the room at the time this shot was fired?"

"I had just set four glasses of beer upon the table, and started to leave the room; I was about opposite the strange gentleman, who sat opposite Greer."

"Has anybody told you what you should say in this examination?"

The boy winced, and of course the opposing counsel objected to the question, but by dint of hard argument and a covert threat to the judge, who I saw was inclined to rule against me, I carried my point and forced the witness to answer.

A feeble "Yes, sir," rewarded me, and redoubling my severe manner, I demanded of the witness:

"Has any money been paid you to swear to certain facts in this case?"

This caused more confusion than ever, and aroused my legal antagonists, but with Janson's aid I again carried my point.

"Yes, sir," answered the boy, slowly. "I was paid one hundred dollars."

"Of whom did you receive this money?"

This question also raised a furor of excitement, and the judge, seemingly in some confusion, ruled the question out. In vain we argued our perfect right to show who had bribed the witness; the judge grew more severe, and even threatening.

With the court against us we could do nothing but file our exceptions to its rulings, which we did.

Poor Snead, the witness, looked the picture of abject terror.

The keeper of the saloon, his master, stood near him, and I saw that his glance at the witness was what produced the confusion.

"Now, Jack Snead," I asked, resolved to make the most of my opportunity, "did the prisoner, William Smith, shoot Joseph Greer?"

"No, sir," he answered, in a faint voice.

"Enough!" I cried. "We will now proceed with the testimony for the defense. Let John Homer be sworn."

Homes was accordingly placed on the witness-stand.

"What is your occupation?" I demanded.

"I am a member of the detective police."

"What attention have you given to this case, in your capacity as a detective?"

"I have been engaged on this case since the time of the shooting of Joseph Greer."

We were obliged to wrangle and dispute with the opposing counsel on almost every question, but managed to get sufficient of Homer's evidence to the jury to show that Jack Snead had been paid one hundred dollars by his employer, at the instance of a third party, to swear that William Smith had fired the fatal shot.

"Mr. Homer, do you know who fired the shot that killed Joseph Greer?"

"I do!" firmly answered Homer.

"Tell the jury your means of so knowing."

"On the evening after this occurrence, I went to the saloon in question, disguised for the purpose of learning what I could of the affair. While I was there, a gentleman entered and proceeded to a back room, followed by the proprietor of the place and the boy, Jack Snead. Unobserved, I quietly slipped into a closet back of the counter, where I could hear what was said by the parties in the back room, and I could also see through a crack in the board partition. I saw the strange gentleman take two fifty-dollar bank-bills out of his pocketbook and hand them to the saloon-keeper, and I saw the saloon-keeper hand the same bills to this witness, Jack Snead."

The commotion caused by this much of Homer's testimony was wonderful. The saloon-keeper turned red in the face, then tried to look furious, but turned hastily away when he met the cool, keen glance of Homer's eyes.

I could not restrain my desire to reach the grand conclusion of the whole matter.

"Mr. Homer, have you in your possession a warrant for the arrest of any person for the murder of Joseph Greer?"

"I have!" answered the detective, showing the warrant. "I have here a State warrant for the arrest of one Charles Crandall, the murderer of Joseph Greer, and there is the man!" leveling his finger at the judge.

"It's false!" hoarsely cried the judge. "Mr. Sheriff, I order you to immediately arrest John Homer for contempt of court!"

"Hold! Mr. Sheriff," said Homer, calmly. "I am aware that I can not arrest a judge on the bench, but there is the murderer of Joseph Greer, as I know by the confession of his own lips!"

Judge Crandall, at this, sprang to his feet, and hurriedly thrust his hand into his bosom, as if to draw a weapon. His eyes glowed with a baleful light, and all trace of color fled from his face. But a glance from the piercing eye of the detective quelled his sudden rage, and he sunk back into his seat.

Confusion reigned supreme in the room, and cries of anger and astonishment were heard on every side.

With great difficulty the sheriff succeeded in clearing the court-room, and in the confusion, witnesses, jurors and prisoner left the room, and on looking for the judge, he, too, had vanished.

Judge Crandall escaped the just penalty of his crime by flight, thus virtually confessing it, and but a few years afterward I learned that he ended his life in the gold-mines, shot while engaged in a game of cards with a ruffianly crew.

Mrs. Jones' Elopement.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

MR. JONES came home that afternoon feeling cross and tired. Business had been dull, and the clerks had been provoking. When he felt out of sorts, as he did that day, a nice supper and his wife's company were the best antidotes he knew of, and he hoped to have them effect a cure in this instance, as they often did in other instances.

But Mrs. Jones was out, the girl said. She had been busy in her room all the afternoon; she didn't know what she was doing. About an hour ago she had put on her bonnet and gone out, and had charged her to tell her husband, when he came home, that she should not be back until late in the evening. "Gone out on particular business, she said," added Bridget.

On particular business," growled Jones. "I'd like to know what particular business she has. I should say it was a wife's business to stay at home. She knows, of course, that I was coming home completely tired out, but that doesn't interfere with her pleasure in the least. She can enjoy herself just the same—probably all the more, because I am out of the way. I wish I knew where she'd gone."

He went up to her room to see if she had worn some of her best clothes.

"Because, if she has," reasoned Mr. Jones, "she's gone off to have a good time, with some one she cares more for than she does for me."

Mr. Jones' brow was black as any thundercloud, at the thought. He was in precisely the right frame of mind to make mountains out of mole-hills.

But she hadn't worn any of her new dresses.

"It can't be she's going to a party, then," concluded Mr. Jones, "or she'd have rigged up more. I must be she's going somewhere else, and wants to keep dark. It begins to look mysterious. A woman don't generally go off in this way, without saying something to her husband, and wear her old clothes, without its meaning something, I've observed," said Mr. Jones, solemnly, to the Mr. Jones in the glass.

"I'd like to know what it all does mean, anyhow."

It was just at this juncture that Mr. Jones discovered a letter on Mrs. Jones' writing-desk. It was a freshly-written page, beginning:

"DEAR EDWARD—"

Mr. Jones' hair raised on end when his eagle eye caught the sight of that name. What awful thing had he discovered? Could it be that his wife was in the habit of writing letters to gentlemen? Perhaps she had gone out to meet one now.

He read the letter through without stopping to take breath from beginning to end.

It read as follows:

"DEAR EDWARD—"

"I have read your touching appeal over and over, until every word of it is stamped upon my heart. It has caused me to fight a terrible battle with myself. I love you, and there is no use for me to deny it. I cannot deceive myself, nor you, by so doing. My duty is to stay with my husband. I loathe him—I despise him; he is a tyrant—but, he is my husband, and as such, I suppose he has a claim upon me, in the eyes of the world, that you have not. But, my darling, I love you, and I have come to the conclusion to cast my lot with yours. I will do as you wish me to. I will meet you at the oak tree to-night at ten o'clock. I hope I shall—"

And here, at the bottom of the page, the letter broke off very abruptly. The other side of the page was blank.

"Great Jehosaphat!" That was the awful word that broke from Mr. Jones' lips, when he had finished reading. It was the nearest to swearing of any word he indulged in. If ever he felt justified in using it, he did now. His face was a sight to behold. It was full of anger and surprise, and complete bewilderment.

"She loves him, does she," he ejaculated, faintly. "And I'm a tyrant, am I! The wretched creature! She loathes me, and despises me, does she! I'll show her a thing or two. Let me see—ten o'clock, at the oak tree; I'll be there, my dear, and I'll learn you 'Dear Edward' something he won't forget. I'll go out this blessed minute and get a couple of officers, and we'll wait for you. I fancy we'll surprise you a little. Great Jehosaphat! and she's actually been deceiving me all the time, and letting some other man talk love to her, and coax her to elope with him! I can't believe it, and yet I can't doubt it, for here it is in her own writing. I wouldn't have believed it, if I hadn't seen it in black and white. Dear me! I wonder if I can bear up under the awful blow! What will folks say? I shall be ashamed to meet anybody. It's awful—awful!" and Mr. Jones wiped his face with his handkerchief, and looked the complete picture of grief.

Mr. Jones was so "struck all of a heap," to use his own expression, by the terrible intelligence that he didn't stop to reason over the matter. He never once thought that "Dear Edward" couldn't by any possibility have received this letter since it hadn't been sent. He only realized that his wife was going to run away, and that she was going to meet her lover at ten o'clock.

"I'll be there, my lady," said Mr. Jones, significantly, putting on his overcoat, preparatory to setting out in search of the proper officers.

"I'll be there, and I'll give you 'Dear Edward' something he didn't bargain for. I'll 'Dear Edward' him."

About nine o'clock Mr. Jones and a couple of officers came up the road stealthily, and secreted themselves behind a clump of bushes near the place where the two mainroads crossed each other.

"Now you mind what I say," said Mr. Jones, "I'll go for him, and you keep out of the way, till I'm done with him. I'll make him wish he'd never thought of such a thing as making

love to other men's wives, see if I don't. I'll pommel him! I'll trounce him within an inch of his life, the contemptible puppy!" and Mr. Jones struck out right and left at his visionary rival in a way that made the officers titter.

They waited, and waited, and kept waiting. The ten o'clock train came in, whistling shrilly. And still no sign of either woman or man for whom they were waiting.

Presently Mr. Jones bade them listen; he heard steps down the road.

The night was dark, and they could not see a rod off. But he was right in thinking he heard steps. Some one was coming.

"It's him, curse him," muttered Mr. Jones. "Now you lay low, and mind what I say. Don't come till I tell you to. I dare say I shall half-kill him, but you keep off, and let me be. I'll take the consequences, if I do kill him completely. Great Jehosaphat! I just yearn to get my hands on the wretch."

"He's close by now," whispered one of the men.

"I see him," answered Mr. Jones, in an awful solemn whisper. "Here, hold my hat. I'm going for him, and may the Lord have mercy upon his soul!"

Accordingly, Mr. Jones "went for him." He made a rush at the tall, black figure coming leisurely up the road. He gave it a punch in the stomach with one fist, and another in the ribs with the other fist, snorting like a wild bull. He was too excited to talk intelligibly, at first. The unsuspecting recipient of such an extraordinary greeting seemed half-inclined to run at first, but, on second thought, seemed to think better of it, and turned upon his assailant.

"Take that, and that, and that," cried Mr. Jones, who had got so he could utter words a trifle more coherently by this time, dealing blows right and left. "Run away with my wife, will you? You old villain, I'll learn you to swoop round the Jones family trying to break it up. Take that—and that! and—oh, great Jehosaphat!"

Mr. Jones' tone suddenly changed; the victim of a husband's righteous wrath had brought his cane to bear upon his foe and was doing good work with it.

"Smith—Dobson! help, help!" shrieked Jones, as the cane fell upon his head and shoulders in unmerciful blows. "Murder! help!"

The officers came to his assistance and succeeded in securing the stranger.

"I'd like to know what this means!" he demanded. "I supposed this neighborhood was respectable, but I should think you're all gone crazy, or else turned highway robbers."

"We'll tell you know what it means," cried Jones. "I don't believe you will want to run away with Samuel Jones' wife again."

"Is that you, Samuel Jones?" asked the prisoner. "I thought your voice sounded kind of familiar, before, but you belted so I couldn't make it out. Are you insane, or idiotic—or what?"

"Lord bless me, if you ain't uncle Joshua!" said Mr. Jones, faintly. He felt small enough, just then, to crawl through a knot-hole. "I'm awful sorry that this has happened—but I couldn't help it—I didn't know it was you. You see, Amelia's fell in love with some fellow, and I came across a letter this afternoon that she had written to him, saying she'd meet him here at ten o'clock, and I got these men to help me, and we waited for him, and I thought you were the man."

"Fell in love with another man and promised to meet him here at ten o'clock? Stuff and nonsense!" exclaimed uncle Joshua, indignantly. "You were always the biggest fool! You're crazy!"

"But I tell you I saw her own letter," exclaimed Mr. Jones. "I ain't crazy now, but I shouldn't wonder if I was before long."

"You've lost all the sense you used to have, and that wasn't enough to brag of," said uncle Joshua, rather uncomplimentarily. "Come along to the house, and we'll ask Amelia what it means."

Uncle Joshua led the way, with a pain in his stomach, caused by Mr. Jones' energetic attempt to learn his supposed rival not to meddle with the Jones family, and Mr. Jones followed in his wake, with a sore head and a very black eye.

There was a light in the sitting-room. Mrs. Jones was there.

"See here, Amelia," exclaimed uncle Joshua, bursting in like a thunderstorm. "Your fool of a husband says you've fell in love with some one, and that you wrote him a letter saying you'd meet him at ten o'clock to-night and run away with him, and he says he's seen this letter. Now, I don't believe a word of it, but I'd like to have you explain, if you can."

"I never wrote any such thing," declared Mrs. Jones, indignantly.

"You did!" exclaimed Mr. Jones. "It's no use for you to lie about it, Amelia. You've broke my heart, and you did write that letter. I found it on your desk, and here it is. It begins—'Dear Edward.'"

"Oh, I know all about it now," cried Mrs. Jones, beginning to laugh. "Oh, dear me! You see, Laura Wade and I agreed to write a story, and I had got nine half-dones, and went over to read it to her this afternoon, and when I got there I found that I'd lost a page of it. I must have left it on my desk. It was about a woman who was going to elope—my story was—and she wrote that she would go all over, and then, when she thought it all over, concluded to stay at home and do her duty. The page that was missing was the one that had the letter on it that she wrote to her lover. You found it, and thought I was going to run away! Oh, dear, I never heard of any thing so funny! Oh, dear me!" and Mrs. Jones laughed until the tears ran down her cheeks.

"I can't see anything very funny about it," said Mr. Jones, feeling rather sheepish. "How was I to know that you were writing stories? You've no business to spend your time in that way."

"That's so," growled uncle Joshua, whose stomach began to feel sore and bruised. "You're a fool for writing stories, and Jones is a fool any way."

Which was poor consolation for Jones. The story of the whole affair leaked out and he will never hear the last of Mrs. Jones' elopement.

THE MAN WHO DOES NOT SUCCEED.—The following beautiful extract is from the pen of the Hon. George S. Hillard: I confess that increasing years bring with them an increasing respect for men who have not succeeded in life, as these words are commonly used. Heaven is said to be the place of those who have not succeeded on earth; and it is sure that celestial glaze does not go to thrive and bloom in the hot blaze of worldly prosperity. Ill success sometimes arises from a superabundance of qualities in themselves good—from a conscience too sensitive—a taste too fastidious—a self-forgetfulness too romantic—a modesty too retiring. I will not go so far as to say, with a living poet, that "the world knows nothing of its men," but there are forms of greatness, or at least excellence, which "die and make no signs."

Heroes of History.

BY LAUNCE PONTZ.

I.—Audubon and Wilson, the Hunter-Naturalists.

PERHAPS there never were truer heroes than the subjects of our little sketch. They were both of the number of those heroes of science who sometimes become heroes of history. They suffer peril by land and sea, for the simple sake of knowledge and truth.

To John James Audubon and Alexander Wilson, working at the same time, unknown to each other, the world is indebted for the greatest and most original works on natural history, ever before written.

They were the first examples of a class never numerous, the Hunter-Naturalists. All hunters are more or less naturalists, of course. Wilson and Audubon were hunters, but also men of knowledge. Both were artists and writers of very fair talent. What they saw they told and drew. The result has been two magnificent books, of which America may well be proud.

Alexander Wilson, the eldest of the pair, was born in 1766 and died in 1818. Audubon, born eighteen years later, (1782), survived his fellow-laborer many years, only dying in 1851, a hale, hearty old man, as straight as a pine, and still a dead shot with the rifle. Wilson was a poor Scotch lad, a weaver, who went to the town school, and studied till he acquired more education than the sons of many rich parents. He early left the loom, dissatisfied with merely earning a living, and became a peddler, wandering over Scotland, picking up knowledge wherever he went. At last, as many another has done, he came to America, where he arrived in 1794, twenty-eight years old, with about five shillings in his pocket, and an empty pack. For eight years he wandered about, seeing the new and delightful country, and loving it better every day. Soon he became a land surveyor, and finally taught school. It was during these wanderings that he conceived the determination to draw and classify all the birds of America. He tells us that soon after his arrival, he shot a red-headed woodpecker, the first he had ever seen, and was struck with its beautiful plumage, so surprising to one used to the sober European birds. He wanted to know what it was called, and no one could tell him its true name or habits. He made up his mind then and